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THE NEW YORKER

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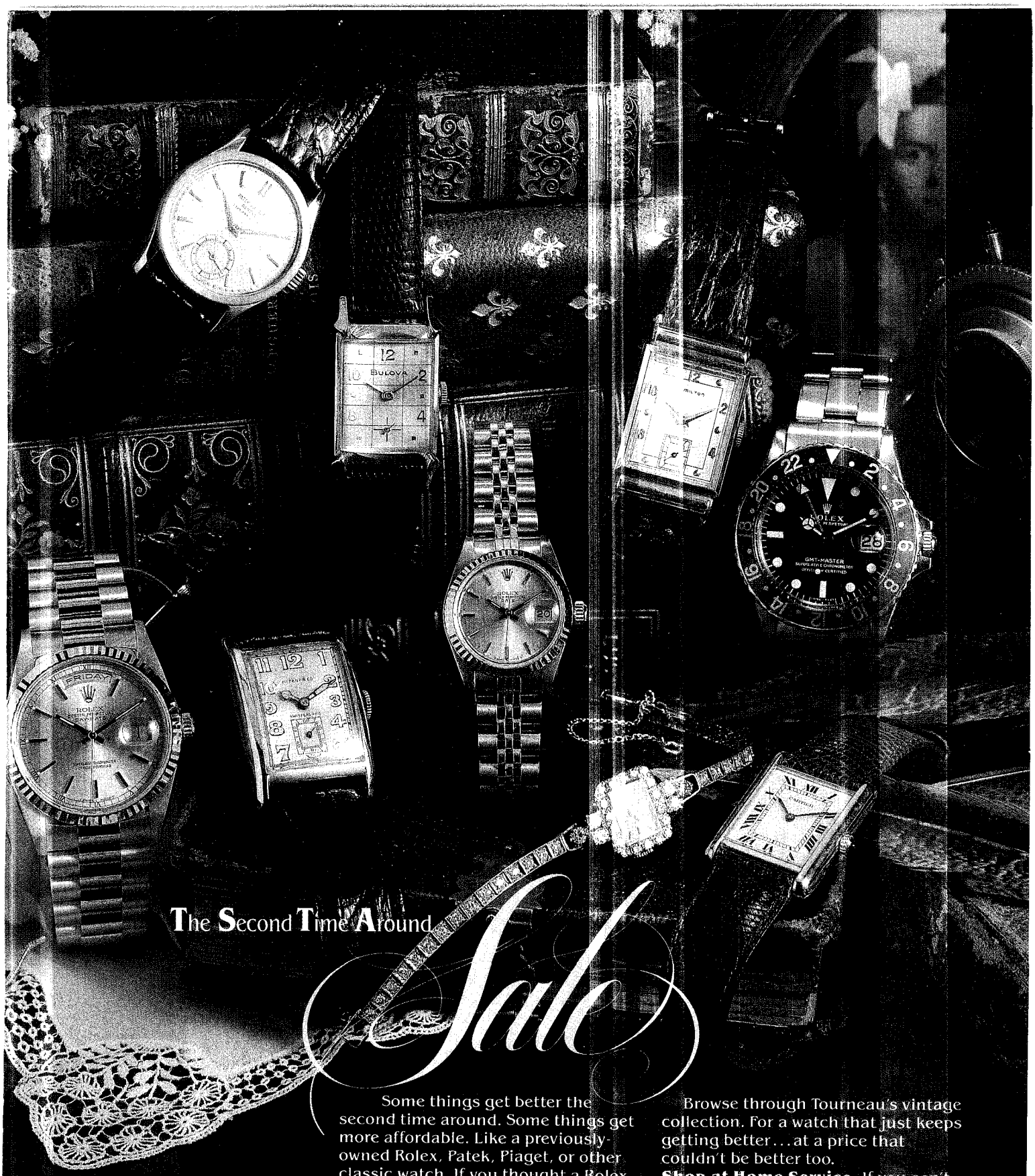

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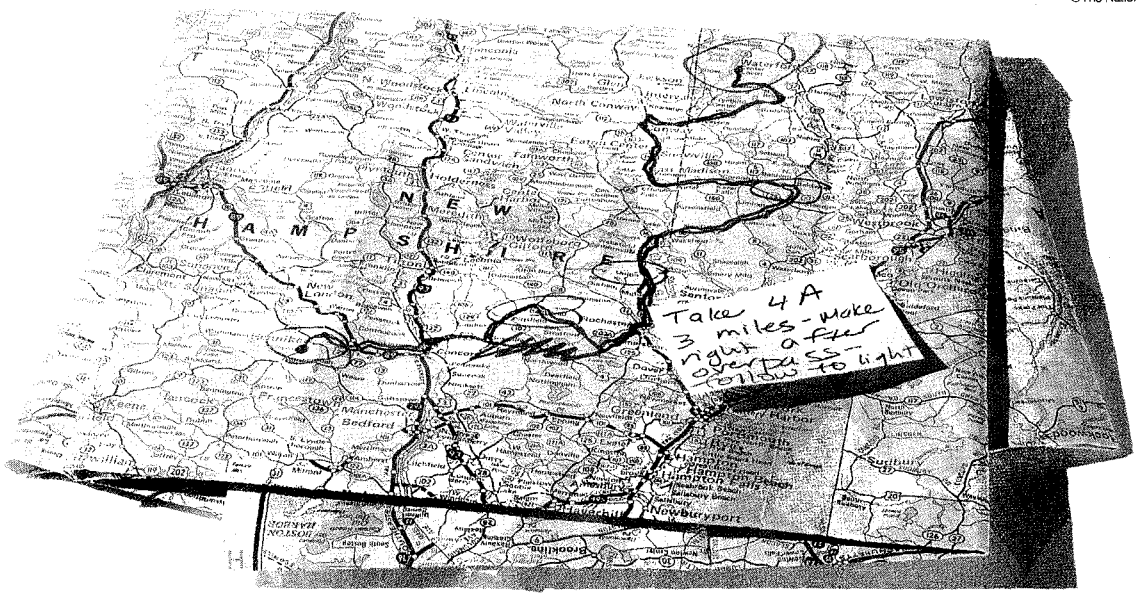

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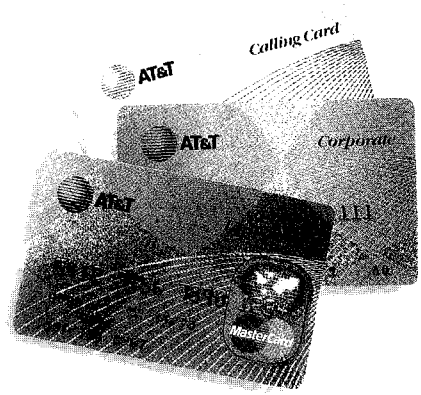

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

WHAT Josh Kornbluth likes best about the fact that his one-man show "Red Diaper Baby" has just reopened downtown, two months after a successful five-week engagement on the Upper West Side, is the vindication he feels looking at the marquee of his new theatre. For there, below the show's title and a picture that makes him look as determined as Mighty Mouse, he sees the words "Actors' Playhouse." It's the apostrophe after "Actors" that tickles him. When he was only a few years older than the Communist child whose boyhood he describes in this autobiographical show, Mr. Kornbluth bolted from the Young Workers Liberation League because his comrades refused to place an apostrophe after "Workers," reasoning that it signified an all too capitalist quality: possessiveness. Mr. Kornbluth's punctiliousness found a (slightly) less political outlet a few years later, in the early eighties, when he took a job as a copy editor at the Boston *Phoenix*. His performing gifts began to find expression in Boston, too. He cites as crucial the night he and a couple of buddies from the paper performed a skit at a colleague's going-away party. Although this was a pretty fussy gathering, teeming with people for whom writing about shows like "Dallas" constituted a serious occupation, Mr. Kornbluth managed to earn a fair number of plaudits.

Since leaving the *Phoenix*, in 1984, Mr. Kornbluth has been the host of a radio variety show and taken part in a comedy revue called "The Gramm-Rudman Act," and he's gone on receiving praise. To be sure, there have been a few hard-liners around who, when faced with the spiky ironies of his political humor, have longed for the meatier boy-meets-tractor themes of traditional Soviet drama. And there are those who think that the first half of "Red Diaper Baby," in which the performer describes his Communist parents and his own left-wing political development, is imperfectly joined to the second half, which centers on his loss of virginity to a much older woman, one Marcie Wasserman. (The acts grew out of earlier, separate pieces.) But most people like the show just fine. Including the Hollywood studio that wants to option it—Universal, of course.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

As You Like It—The first of two plays in the New York Shakespeare Festival's free summer series in the Park. The cast includes Larry Bryggman, Richard Libertini, Elizabeth McGovern, Kathryn Meisle, Donald Moffat, George Morfogen, Brad Sullivan, and Jake Weber. Previews begin July 2. (Delacorte, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting **Columbus, the musical**, by Janet Villella and Earl Wilson, Jr. In previews. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

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OPENED RECENTLY

Balancing Act—A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

The Best of Forbidden Broadway—This tenth-anniversary edition of Gerard Alessandrini's long-running, ever-fluctuating musical revue is, as one might expect, a treat. There is some new material, but our favorite sequences are still the spoof of "M. Butterfly" and the "Speed-the-Plow" number, "Madonna's Brain," in which David Mamet and Ron Silver try to teach Madonna to act and she ends up tearing off most of her clothes. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/4/92.) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

Catskills on Broadway—A festival of ethnicity and all but unbroken laughter. Freddie Roman and Mal Z. Lawrence are the Jewish comedians; Dick Capri handles the Italians. The jokes explode around us, and there isn't a dud in the lot. Marilyn Michaels, the fourth member of the company, does imitations of imitations. (12/23/91) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Conversations with My Father—If you're looking for a totally satisfying theatrical experience, try the new Herb Gardner, a bittersweet memory play about a Lower East Side barkeep, his two sons, and the patrons of his tavern. As staged by Daniel Sullivan, with an ace cast led by the wonderful Judd Hirsch, the play does what "Jake's Women" and "Dancing at Lughnasa" would probably do if their authors were, respectively, more sophisticated and less sentimental. Grab this one. (4/13/92) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Crazy for You—Loosely based on "Girl Crazy," which opened in 1930, this glorious show is actually a celebration of the music of George Gershwin and the lyrics of his brother Ira—nineteen songs in all—and also of the witty, imaginative choreography of Susan Stroman. Ken Ludwig wrote the lively book. Harry Groener and Jodi Benson are the lead actor/dancers. The scenery is by Robin Wagner; the costumes are by William Ivey Long; and the masterly direction is by Mike Ockrent. Bless 'em all. (3/2/92) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Death and the Maiden—Mike Nichols' Americanized version of Ariel Dorfman's play (in which Juliet Stevenson took London by storm last year) is a sad disappointment. The play, which is set in "a country that is probably Chile" and concerns a woman's attempt to punish the man she holds responsible for torturing her in captivity fifteen years before, is anything but subtle, and Glenn Close, Richard Dreyfuss, and Gene Hackman are all grossly miscast. (3/30/92) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Falsettos—This back-to-back revival of "March of the Falsettos" and "Falsettoland," two of William Finn's three one-act musicals about a childish, self-absorbed man who leaves his wife and son for his not very nice male lover, is strictly for those who care. We've never understood the appeal of William Finn's "Marvin" trilogy. It has a chronology as complicated as the Oedipus cycle and a dramatic sensibility akin to that of the Oresteia. To us, though, it has always seemed like banality set to music: shallow, unlikable people expressing themselves in shallow, unlikable songs. (5/11/92) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Fires in the Mirror: Crown Heights, Brooklyn and Other Identities—Anna Deavere Smith is a wily mimic and verbal caricaturist, with a sharp, discerning ear and a tongue to match. The program, which she wrote as well as performs, takes as its point of departure the aftermath of the accident last summer, in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, in which a car carrying members of a Hasidic sect went out of control and killed a black child, Gavin Cato. Miss Smith impersonates more than twenty-five people who were either directly or indirectly concerned. Her net is far-flung, and, not surprisingly, she is often strongest when funniest. All the material in the show was based on actual interviews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. The show is on hiatus through July 6; performances resume July 7.)

Five Guys Named Moe—The guys are black dancers and singers of ability and spirit, who perform the songs (either lyrics or music or both) of the late Louis Jordan, among them "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying," "Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" This London import makes a merry evening. (4/20/92) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Flaubert's Latest—A comedy written by Peter Parnell and directed by David Saint. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Guys and Dolls—A lively production of Frank Loesser's perfect musical, under the direction of Jerry Zaks. Nathan Lane and Faith Prince are the leading guy and doll, and Tony Walton designed the stunning scenery. (4/27/92) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Innocents' Crusade—A play by Keith Reddin. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes July 5.)

Jake's Women—Alan Alda is at his genial best in the new Neil Simon. The play, about an aging writer trying to come to terms with the women in his life, past and present, is pretty much what you'd expect: some funny lines and a lot of phony dialogue. It's predictable, banal, and contrived, but at least it showcases a fine cast of actresses that includes Kate Burton and Joyce Van Patten. (4/6/92) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

Jelly's Last Jam—The music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and, at the same time, an unsparing delineation of Morton himself. The show, an original if ever there was one, was written and directed by George C. Wolfe. In the starring role, Gregory Hines combines his astonishing talents as tap dancer and actor; Savion Glover, who plays the character as a young man, is worthy of him, which is saying a lot. Also present are Keith David, Tonya Pinkins, Wayne Mathis, and Mary Bond Davis. Luther Henderson has adapted Morton's music and offered some music of his own; the lyrics were written by Susan Birkenhead; and Hope Clark was the choreographer. (5/11/92) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

The Last Laugh—The Jewish Repertory Theatre wraps up its season with this comedy by Michael Hardstark. (344 E. 14th St., 505-2667. Closes July 6.)

Man of La Mancha—The granddaddy of all junk musicals. This road-show revival is in every respect adequate to the occasion. Joan Diener and Laurence Guittard lead the cast. Tony Martinez, who plays Sancho, recently celebrated his two-thousandth performance in the role—and it shows. (5/11/92) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Marvin's Room—A play about dying, suffering, and sacrifice in one family, written in a style so frisky as to set the teeth permanently on edge. There is a fine performance by Mark Rosenthal as a smoldering adolescent. Also with Alice Drummond, Laura Esterman, and Tim Monsion. Scott McPherson is the dramatist. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

The Most Happy Fella—This is one musical we think the world could be without and feel no sorrow. The story of a girl forced to content herself with some old duffer because some other old duffer wanted to teach everyone a lesson about making do with what life has to offer, it's pseudo opera superimposed on pseudo Americana. As for Gerald Gutierrez's Goodspeed Opera production, it's your basic slightly-better-than-average dinner-theatre revival. What's the rumpus? (2/24/92) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me—A play written and performed by David Drake. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

The Price—Eli Wallach's performance as an old Jewish furniture dealer is as much fun as anything in town. The rest of Arthur Miller's

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play—which is about two estranged brothers who must share their late father's estate—is no fun at all. The acting by all hands is good, though. Hector Elizondo and Joe Spano are the brothers and Debra Mooney is Elizondo's wife. (6/22/92) (Roundabout Theatre, at Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes July 19.)

Red Diaper Baby—Josh Kornbluth's one-man show, recently seen at Second Stage. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

Ruthless!—This camp musical about a monster child star is harmless and amusing enough—assuming you can stomach the little girl. She gave us the pip. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076.)

Salomé and **Chinese Coffee**—Al Pacino stars in two shows that are running in repertory. The first is a production of the Oscar Wilde work, and the second is a contemporary play by

Jean DeBaer, Mark Nelson, and John Bedford Lloyd in "Flaubert's Latest"

Ira Lewis. ("Salomé" is reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. "Salomé" closes July 23 and "Chinese Coffee" July 15.)

Sight Unseen—Donald Margulies' engrossing new play, which is about an Eric Fischl-type painter who decides to look up an old girlfriend he once treated badly, takes the contemporary art scene to task. Technically, it also plays around with time a good deal, though never sloppily or gratuitously. You end up being affected by a curious kind of resonance—it's earned, not something you've brought with you into the theatre. (2/3/92) (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Spike Heels—"Private Lives" à la mode. The combatants are a sexy, volatile young woman (Saundra Santiago) and three Back Bay types—a writer (Tony Goldwyn), a lawyer (Kevin Bacon), and a fiancée in sensible shoes (Julie White). The setting is Boston, the ending is happy, and laughter abounds. Theresa Rebeck wrote the play, and Michael Greif directed it. (6/22/92) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes July 4.)

A Streetcar Named Desire—Gregory Mosher's revival, with Jessica Lange in the role of Blanche DuBois, plays like a parody. It features a cuddly, avuncular Stanley (Alec Baldwin), a Stella (Amy Madigan) straight out of a Carol Burnett skit, and a lot of embarrassing staging. Miss Lange's acting is all "for the camera." One feels that she is trying to rescue the role of Blanche from decades' worth of assumptions about it but hasn't had much help or guidance from her director. (4/27/92) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

The Substance of Fire—Jon Robin Baitz's play about an intransigent publisher at odds with his grown children, having moved from Playwrights Horizons, seems stronger than ever in this more formal theatre. The remarkable Ron Rifkin continues in the leading role, and he is ably supported by the members of the company—Patrick Breen, John Benjamin Hickey, Cordelia Richards, and Maria Tucci. (3/9/92) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Tubes—A performance work by Blue Man Group about art and other matters. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.)

Two Trains Running—August Wilson's latest, set in a Pittsburgh luncheonette in 1969, is one of those plays in which all the performances seem to be groping hotly after award nominations and everything is freighted with Meaning. (4/27/92) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Weird Romance—Ellen Greene and Jonathan Hadary lead the cast of a science-fiction musical by Alan Brennert (book), Alan Menken (score), and David Spencer (lyrics). Barry Harman directed. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Closes July 5.)

LONG RUNS

Beau Jest: A comedy by James Sherman. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)... **Cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.)... **Dancing at Lughnasa:** How you respond to Brian Friel's wistful autobiographical play depends a good deal on your personality and preoccupations. Either you will find it lovely and lyrical or it will strike you as the memory play from Hell. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **The Fantasticks:** The longest-running long run recently celebrated its thirty-second birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.)... **Forever Plaid:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)... **Lost in Yonkers:** This family melodrama by Neil Simon, set in Yonkers during the Second World War, is about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)... **Les Misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **Miss Saigon:** Oh, the horror! The horror! (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)... **Nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)... **Perfect Crime:** A murder mystery by Warren Manzi. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401.)... **The Phantom of the Opera:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)... **The Secret Garden:** This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)... **Song of Singapore:** A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)... **Tony n' Tina's Wedding:** The never-ending nuptials of Anthony Angelo Nunzio and Valentina Lynne Vitale. With audience participation, as you probably know. (St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200.)... **The Will Rogers Follies:** The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. With Mac Davis. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

DANCE

THIS week, at the Met, the Kirov Ballet will perform a revival of Leonid Lavrovsky's "Romeo and Juliet"—the Kirov's 1940 staging of Prokofiev's score. In anticipation, we decided to take another look at a Soviet film of the work, which records Galina Ulanova's legendary performance with the Bolshoi (who acquired "Romeo" in 1946). For comparison, we also watched a videotape from the nineteen-seventies of the Bolshoi's "Romeo," with Natalia Bessmertnova and Mikhail Lavrovsky, the choreographer's son, in the title roles. Comparing an elaborate film of a ballet with a performance video of it from some twenty years later is like comparing Marilyn Monroe and Madonna—you have to make all sorts of allowances. And yet we couldn't help being struck by two differences in the performing styles. First, in the film, the dancers delayed moving and gesturing until the metre of Prokofiev's music forced them into action, which may account for the effect of superhuman urgency. Sometimes it is even a ghoulish effect, as when Romeo, apparently dead, pops up like a jack-in-the-box to kiss Juliet one last time. In the video, the attack is softer and more even. It seems to follow the melodic line. The dancing looks less dated, but also far less dramatic.

The second difference has to do with phrasing. In the film, the dancers—especially Ulanova—begin a phrase with whatever steps are assigned to the legs and then fully conclude those steps before doing the port de bras and mime. In the video, the dancers often begin to work their arms and hands before their legs have stopped moving. In the film, the characters appear to be convulsed with dance because they have been seized by feeling; they look noble and real. In the video, the characters appear to arrive at emotion because they dance beautifully; they look noble and stylized. We will be curious to see what approach the Kirov uses.

IN TOWN

Kirov Ballet—June 29-30 at 8: "La Bayadère."... ¶ July 1 at 2 and 8: "Romeo and Juliet."... ¶ July 2 at 8: "The Leaves Are Fading," "Apollo," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," and "Scotch Symphony." ... ¶ July 3 at 8: "Swan Lake." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Fred Darsow—With his company in several works. Randy Warshaw and his group are also on the program. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 3 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow—In the Ted Shawn Theatre: A double bill of Philadanco and the Limón Dance Company, June 30-July 2 at 8, July 3 at 8:30, and July 4 at 2 and 8:30. Philadanco will perform "Southern Landscape" and "Love 'n' Pain." The Limón Dance Company will present "Mazurkas" and "Day on Earth."... The Mark Morris Dance Group, July 7-8 at 8. The program comprises "A Lake," "Three Preludes," "Polka," an unnamed work (première), "Beautiful Day," "Bedtime," and "Gloria." Through July 11.... ¶ In the Studio/Theatre: Barcelona's Danat Danza in "El Cielo Está Enladrillado," July 3 at 8, July 4 at 5, and July 5 at 7. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745.)

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—ROBERT TAYLOR, Boston Globe

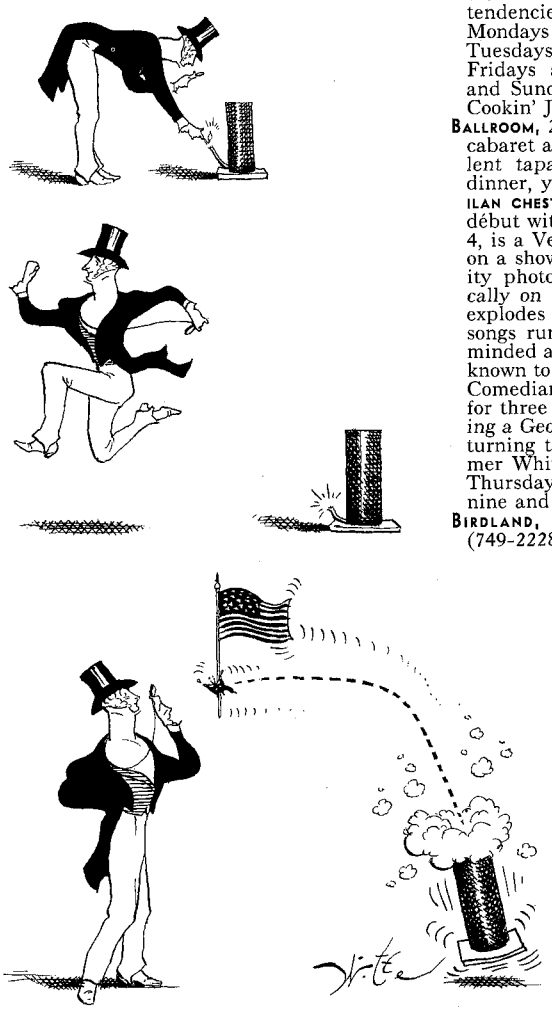
Just published by Knopf

NIGHT LIFE

PLENTY of American industries need to be concerned about competition from Japan, but the music industry can relax. To judge from a recent sampling of that nation's bands, at Limelight, the pop charts won't be turning Japanese anytime soon. Each of the bands on the bill seemed to take cues from specific Western artists, but, invariably, much was lost in the translation. Sometimes, the result was unintentional comedy; other times, it was just pretty bad music.

The evening, which was part of the New Music Seminar, was called "Psycho Nite: Musical Madness from Japan"—though what, exactly, was "psycho" about it was unclear. The first band we caught was Venus Peter, five mop-topped lads who appear to have carefully studied British rave bands like Happy Mondays and Charlatans U.K. They had down the look, the sound, and the mannerisms, but they didn't have the songs. Pizzicato Five, who followed, combine house music, avant-garde fashion, and performance art in a manner that recalls Deee-Lite. This is a harder stunt to pull off: the ironies and cultural references of a band like Deee-Lite are easy for an outsider to miss. When two male band members, wearing kilts and blazers, jumped around onstage like cheerleaders, holding aloft posters bearing the band's name, the audience was more puzzled than pumped up. The group's closing number, a long, repetitive dance groove whose only lyrics were "Thank you," inspired us to take a look at the club's back rooms.

The final band, and main attraction, was Shonen Knife. This all-female trio, who came onstage in bright-colored Malibu Barbie outfits, has something of a following here. Their songs are stiff, rudimentary rockers after the Ramones and the Go-Go's—*stuff that would ordinarily* never make it out of the garage. Their appeal is in their inadvertently hilarious lyrics. Unfortunately, the mix was so terrible that you could make out only the occasional snippet—"You don't need to be a walrus," for instance, or "Oh, sexy girl!" Phrases like that leave you wanting more.



(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The **WISEGUYS** wind up a stay in the Oak Room on July 4. Their program features such composers as Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, Ray Noble, and Maltby and Shire. **KT SULLIVAN** begins a run on July 7. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. **ILAN CHESTER,** who is making his New York début with an engagement that ends on July 4, is a Venezuelan pop star who likes to put on a show with a capital "S." In his publicity photo, Chester is seen rocking ecstatically on his piano stool as his grand piano explodes with smoke and light. Chester's songs run from lovelorn ballads to ecology-minded anthems, and his concerts have been known to feature extravagant dance routines. Comedian-impressionist **JIM MORRIS** takes over for three weeks beginning on July 7, assuming a Georgeherbertwalkerian demeanor, and turning the entire club into an ersatz Summer White House. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy, two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. The schedule, in part: Rob Silvan & Fine Line on July 2; the **JOHN HICKS** trio July 3-4; and the Shizuko Yokoyama quartet on July 5. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, a gift shop, and, of course, those incredible shrinking aisles that turn a mid-set dash to the rest room into something of a steeplechase. **DAVE VALENTIN** and **WAYNE HENDERSON'S NEXT CRUSADE** share a bill June 30-July 5; the **BARBARA DENNERLEIN** trio comes in on July 6; and the **MONGO SANTAMARIA** octet begins work on July 7, in a double

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bill with Swiss Movement (a duo comprising Les McCann and Eddie Harris). First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. The **Lounge Lizards,** a group led by saxophonist/composer John Lurie, come in on June 30. The group's foremost strength is ensemble playing: they like to go deep into a funk groove and stay there. Lurie's compositions emphasize complex rhythms, Arabic melodies, and a good deal of groping, minimalistic exposition. The group maintains a nice balance between order and chaos: a melody is established, torn apart, and then sewn back together again. And Lurie, who keeps up a deadpan patter between numbers, is too much of an entertainer to ever let the band get ponderous. **Leo Kottke** and **Cheryl Wheeler** are here July 3-4. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A dark, wood-panelled bar with candles, white tablecloths, and a grand piano around which bassists, drummers, and the like have been known to congregate. A trio consisting of pianist **Benny Green,** bassist **Peter Washington,** and saxophonist **Javon Jackson** is here through July 4; **Michael Weiss, Al Harewood,** and **John Webber** begin a week-long gig on July 6. Music from ten. Dining.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times.* There's no stage per se, but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some nice, wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. The café is a nice place to while away an hour, and you never know who'll turn up. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving: the management has had the good sense not to renovate. In recent years, CB's has become something of an empire; the club is now flanked by a pizzeria/boutique on one side and a bar/performance space on the other—all your shopping needs taken care of in one convenient location. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Club 53, Sixth Ave. at 53rd St. (261-5853)—A new cabaret in the New York Hilton. It's a pleasantly lulling spot, where you can sink into deep sofas and eat off of big plates. **Lesley Gore,** who was a teen wonder in the sixties ("It's My Party," etc.), is in the middle of a run here. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A candlelit restaurant within ticket-scalping distance of the Palladium. **Dizzy Reece's Hard Bop Connection** will be at work here until July 5, and the **Frappé Band,** featuring Kirk Joseph, will start up on July 7. Music at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Sundays and at nine-thirty, eleven-thirty, and one on Fridays and Saturdays. The **Clifford Jordan** big band is here every Monday at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty, and **Phoebe Légère** entertains Wednesdays through Fridays at five-thirty and eight-thirty.

Dan Lynch, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—As uninviting a hole-in-the-wall as you're likely to find, this blues bar is dingy, depressingly lit, and located on a block out of a Gus Van Sant movie. In the world of blues, however, this spells authenticity, and the bands here are often worth the trouble. Music from ten nightly.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—The seating arrangements in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement make flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. Tenor saxophonist **Benny Golson,** who made his name with Dizzy Gillespie's band in the mid-fifties and who has written a few standards in his day, such as "I Remember Clifford," leads a quartet here through July 5. The **Kenny Barron** quintet starts up on July 7. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **Les Paul** leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly. Tuba player **Sam Pilafian** leads his Travelin' Light ensemble here on July 8. Music from eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—Brass rails, vintage posters, Hirschfeld drawings, a menu full of items like bangers and mash, and a piano. Knickerbocker is an airy, good-spirited place and, while music often takes a back seat to conversation, some able piano-and-bass teams turn up regularly. Pianist **Nat Jones** is in residence July 1-4, with bassist **Lyle Bennett** joining him July 3-4. Music starts at about nine-forty-five.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A plain blue back room whose far wall is decorated with round things: a Frisbee, some singles, a drum head, and the woofer from a speaker cabinet, to name a few. The crowd may make you feel as if you have a midterm to study for, but many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. The **Lunachicks** and the **Vacant Lot** appear on July 4. Shows are usually at ten on Thursdays, at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays, and at nine other nights.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The club has recently gone Creole: there's a new chef, who's versed in dishes like fried catfish, and the current musical offering is a New Orleans-style jazz band, featuring pianist **Terry Waldo,** trumpeter **Bill Dillard,** and clarinettist **Orange Kellin.** Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Up in this sky-high cabaret, which has a nifty view of the city, you sometimes feel as if you're in a plane that can't find the runway. The entertainment usually lifts you a little bit higher, although sometimes it just causes motion sickness. **Susan Anton,** the actress and singer, who was lately seen in the cast of "The Will Rogers Follies," finishes a run here on July 4. An Irving Berlin revue, which will be running all summer, begins on July 7. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and Fridays to **Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks,** Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Show times vary.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre, once the home of Studio 54, is now the site of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs, which was formerly located in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. On July 1 **Gwar** will appear here. **The Beautiful South,** which performs on July 8, is led by former Housemartins Paul Heaton and Dave Hemingway. The group plays a disarmingly pleasant, post-Smiths sort of pop, over which they layer some fairly caustic, head-turning lyrics. Their latest record, "0898," is an entirely winning effort. Show times vary.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar attached to a Mexican restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos, New Mexico memorabilia, and live music nightly—country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Shows from ten-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut decorated with a fruit-and-bamboo motif and dedicated to such things as calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. S.O.B.'s dance floor is always jumping with Rastas and N.Y.U. students, and there's always someone onstage

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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

shouting "Put your hands in the air!" The young Brazilian vocalist **ED MOTTA**, whose influences are more American soul and funk than Brazilian styles, is performing July 1-2, in his U.S. début. **EEK-A-MOUSE** claims July 3. Closed Sundays. Dining.

SPACE AT CHASE, 98 Third Ave., at 12th St. (475-1407)—One of those East Village joints where, for a few bucks, you can hear a handful of local rock bands. As is usually the case at these establishments, some of the bands will make you want to cower under the pinball machine while others will make you want to dance and shout and start your own independent label. As for décor, there's a bar, some chairs, some tables, some walls, a ceiling, and two dart boards. Music from nine-thirty, except on Tuesdays, when it starts at seven.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Upstairs at this gilt-railinged, lamé-curtained club is a plush little nook called the Blue Room, which boasts celestial-motif wallpaper and a profusion of deep-sea blue. The racket of midtown can't find you here. One of the current attractions (Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine) is **ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY**, a fine singer-pianist who can imitate Billie Holiday and Marlene Dietrich, sing an E-flat above high C, and say, without sounding immodest, "People often come up to me and ask why I'm not famous." Apart from a few requisite supper-club numbers—at an engagement a few years back, the audience requested "Memory" three times a night—Ms. Callaway's catalogue includes her own songs, songs by lesser-known New York composers, and songs improvised around suggestions made by musically inclined patrons. The incomparable singer-pianist Charles De Forest reigns here Tuesdays through Saturdays after ten.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. **RICK MARGITZA'S** quintet holds forth June 30-July 4. The **PETER LEITCH** quintet commences work on July 7. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, located near what was once called the Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. The pillared, loftlike room is decorated in a hodgepodge, vaguely Bourbon Street manner, and sight lines are above average. But the sound system has been known to be temperamental. Music from eight on weeknights and from eight-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **HORACE TAPSCOTT** trio plays here through July 5, and the **CHARLES MC PHERSON** quartet begins work on July 7. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—A relatively young club that has already managed to make a scene. Wetlands is usually thought of as a Deadhead hangout, but the club has also been the launching pad for a generation of young New York bands like Blues Traveler and the Spin Doctors. Shows here can be absurdly sweaty and tight—the club seems to have a hard time turning people away—and it can be hard to get a view of the stage. Still, Wetlands is such a maze of a place that there's always some mellow corner to retire to. Shows from ten.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy, awninged eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Saxophonist **JOE TEMPERLEY**, pianist **JUNIOR MANCE**, and bassist **PAUL WEST** can be found here through July 4. Music from eight every night but Sundays, when sets begin at seven-thirty.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

"WHAT'S 'thicks'?" the young lady asks of her Twizzler-sucking date, as the highly touted initials representing George Lucas's sound system, "THX," spread across the screen prior to the opening credits of "Batman Returns" at the Loews Village Theatre VII. Lucas's tag line claims "The Audience Is Listening." Obviously, they're listening a lot more than they're reading, for when it comes to gauging the hordes pulverizing their way into the opening weekend of a 70-mm., Dolby Digitaled, Burbank-to-Century City corporate-nailbiter-with-special-effects, all the press coverage in the world is no match for the pop-cultural data you can amass from a blockbuster's inaugural-Friday-night audience.

POLITICAL: "See Perot on the 'Today' show? Didn't he sound just like the guy in the Tropicana Twister commercial?" asked the young lady in a bodysuit more shredded than Catwoman's, and in makeup much tougher. "Catch Clinton on MTV? Cool."

MUSICAL: Outside the theatre, a street person sang "All I Ask of You," from "The Phantom of the Opera." Few gave money. Inside, however, the entire audience sang along with Loews' "Relax and enjoy the show" jingle.

GASTRONOMIC: "Make sure she scoops from the top," says the guy to his date, as he hands her popcorn money and dives for the bathroom. "If she digs, stop her. I'm not paying for all that unpopped and too-salty stuff."

SARTORIAL: There must be group rates for those who wear turned-around baseball caps, or who tote Super Soaker 100s.

ORACULAR: After the trailer's lengthy buildup for his new Western, "Unforgiven," the camera zooms in on the Rushmored face of Clint Eastwood. The audience responds with silence.

FINANCIAL: I've-waited-all-week-for-this-film audiences are passionate. Witness the battle for Star of the Year. It's not on the screen. It started in the back halfway through the film, with one guy wildly cheering every time the Penguin got gross, and another guy going berserk for Catwoman's every lick, and each getting on the other's nerves. Conflict escalated to a wall-slamming fight in the lobby which was loud enough to attract the back third of the audience and drown out the THX (though obviously still too tame to wake the ushers). Ten minutes later, the victor emerged through the back theatre doors, to wild approval. Hollywood, take note: All hail your new queen by full-price-ticket-stub acclamation—Michelle Pfeiffer.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

SERIOUS FUN!—Lincoln Center's annual survey of nontraditional performing arts and artists, July 7-9 at 8: "Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights," a play by Gertrude Stein, as interpreted by Robert Wilson. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050.)

DIXON PLACE—July 6 at 8: Keith Curran in a reading of his new play, "The Stand In."... ¶ July 7-8 at 8: Richard Elovich in "Someone Else from Queens Is Queer." (258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Dorothea Tanning at the New York Public Library

ART

ANDREA MANTEGNA's nobly handsome self-portraits give one the unmistakable impression of an imperial malcontent: his every stony feature and furrow evokes one fool or another whom he was obliged to suffer. Mantegna, the prodigy son of a Paduan carpenter, began his career at the age of ten, when he was apprenticed to the painter Squarcione, and he was celebrated from the very beginning, by humanist poets and rulers alike. Therein, surely, lay the seed of his vainglory. He married into the Bellini family of Venice when barely twenty and became court painter to the Gonzaga family of Mantua shortly thereafter, and he remained at this luxurious pinnacle for the rest of his long life. In the catalogue for the Mantegna show at the Met (through July 12), the late Sir Lawrence Gowing writes that the artist "is, no doubt, a prime exponent of something essential in the tradition—one of the great archetypes. But an exponent and an archetype of what?" It's an apt observation and a provocative question.

Though Mantegna flourished just before the painters of what came to be called the High Renaissance, he didn't really pave the way for them. His paintings depict figures that are statuesque and iconic rather than fluid and active. He is the great master of grisaille, which originally meant the monochromatic depiction of stone. In this sense, he is "archaic." Yet he may also seem strikingly advanced, even "modern," to a contemporary viewer. The contours of his angelic prototypes, for instance, seem to point more to the nineteenth century and an artist like Burne-Jones than to his immediate successors.

The show at the Met includes paintings and prints by Mantegna, as well as various related works by other artists of Mantegna's period and by some slightly later. (Several of his masterpieces are site-specific, so to

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speak, and remain in Padua, Mantua, and elsewhere.) The portrait drawings are breathtaking and revelatory. An especially gripping one of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga—wildly theatrical, with graphic gusto, and almost photographically cropped—recalls Mantegna's own chiselled good looks and is perhaps a veiled self-portrait: a fiery vision of ambition straining to be realized.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain" includes more than a hundred works of art, from a wooden ceiling to a mosaic dado to an ivory coffin. Starts July 1. . . . ¶ A show featuring nine centuries' worth of Korean ceramics—celadon ware and other glazed objects—drawn from the Ataka collection. Through July 12. . . . ¶ A large gathering of paintings, drawings, and prints by the Paduan Renaissance master Andrea Mantegna. Through July 12. . . . ¶ The recent donation of the Perls collection—a hundred and sixty-three objects from the kingdom of Benin—has substantially redefined the museum's African holdings. This exhibition of the collection is a welcome relief from the rigid theatre of many of the museum's blockbusters: it enables viewers to make their own discoveries. Through Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "Modern Design: 1890-1990" shows off the museum's holdings in twentieth-century furniture, architectural and design drawings, glass, ceramics, and other objects. . . . NOTE: The museum's roof garden, planted with eight sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"In the Realm of Architecture." This retrospective of the work of Louis Kahn (1901-74) includes about three hundred drawings, sketches, models, and photographs. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ Félix González-Torres's modestly affecting project consists of a large black-and-white photograph of his slept-in, empty double bed displayed in the museum's "Projects" gallery; identical copies can be seen on billboards throughout the city. In the museum, the picture's luscious masses of folds blend into the patterns of the room's white-and-gray marble floor. It has been installed modernistically off center, yet in this space it comes across as an arrestingly un-arty portrayal of loss and longing. The billboards, while they show the same image, are entirely different in spirit. They offer welcome moments of warmth, calm, and the personal in otherwise harsh urban settings. There are twenty-four billboards, corresponding to the day of the month last year on which the artist's lover died of AIDS. Through June 30. . . . ¶ Cults of personality, while working wonders for the business of many modern designers, have at times spoiled the idealism in which modern design is rooted. The Finnish designer Kaj Franck, who shunned stardom, happily never had any trouble finding buyers for his remarkably lean and timeless utilitarian pieces. In this small, pleasant exhibition, Franck's gloriously spare designs are left to speak for themselves. Particularly impressive is his highly affordable Kilta tableware, which was in production from 1953 to 1975 and still looks contemporary. Its finely tuned colors, in such contrasting shades as deep aqua green and chartreuse, seem like refined versions of our own Fiestaware. Even when he worked at the higher end of the market, Franck kept his purity intact. His Soap Bubble vases, from the nineteen-fifties, are so perfectly lifelike that they look ready to float blissfully away. . . . ¶ "Antoni Tàpies in Print" presents more than a hundred lithographs, intaglio prints, and illustrated books, from the forties to the present, by the Catalan artist. Through Aug. 9. . . . ¶ Photographs by Gertrude Käsebier (1852-1934), including genre scenes, allegorical compositions, and portraits of New Yorkers, Native Americans, and fellow-photographers. Through July 14. . . . ¶ "More than One Photography" features sixty post-1980 works that incorporate photography in one way or another, drawn from each of the museum's six curatorial departments. Through July 19. . . . ¶ Twenty-three videotapes, mostly from the seventies, by Joan Jonas, Nam June Paik, and William Wegman. Through July 16. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Rotunda, Rotunda, let down your hair. "The Guggenheim Museum and the Art of this Century" is the overarching title for the reopening festivities. "Masterpieces from the Guggenheim Collection" is on view uptown, along with Dan Flavin's fluorescent-light installation, "Untitled (to Tracy, to celebrate the love of a lifetime)." Downtown, "From Brancusi to Bourgeois" marks the grand opening of the **Guggenheim Museum SoHo** (575 Broadway). (The museum is open daily, except Thursdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge on Tuesdays from 5 to 8. . . . ¶ The SoHo branch is open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings until 10.)

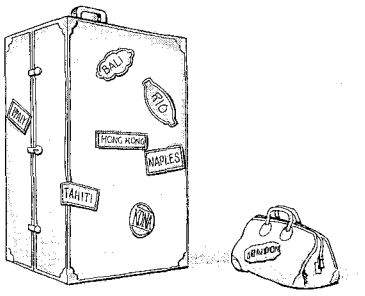
Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Richard Prince was one of the most incisive artists of the late seventies. He took on such volatile issues as originality (he rephotographed magazine advertisements for luxury goods) and sex and celebrity (he appropriated a naughty soft-core photograph of a prepubescent Brooke Shields, which is a composite of her made-up face and upper body and the body of an adult porn model). But because these dastardly aesthetic acts were perpetrated with grainy, modestly scaled photographs, he was treated as a poor stepchild of the dominant painting scene, of primary interest to theoreticians. So it is commendable that the Whitney, which has offered surveys of more widely collected painters like Schnabel, Salle, Fischl, and Winters, has mounted this show. Unfortunately, though, it downplays the early work, which is less materially seductive but more intellectually challenging, in favor of the larger and more dramatic later work. An essentially minor but sensational untitled group of pictures with the subtitle "Entertainers"—blurry head shots of performers, at least one of whom is a porn star—is given too much space, while Prince's rephotographed Marlboro Men, which have far more interesting and subtle ramifications, are given too little. Yet despite these imbalances, the show is roomy enough to contain a surprisingly diverse range of works. As far as his paintings go, certain groups, such as the Rothkoesque joke paintings, remain impressive; the reverential recent paintings, while formally impeccable, have less bite. Prince is at a crossroads, and needs to decide if he will now become an insider or remain on the fringe. Through July 12. . . . ¶ An exhibition of landscapes, seascapes, portraits, and boxing scenes by painter and lithographer George Bellows (1882-1925). Through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ The first part of a show of recent additions to the museum's collection is currently on view; more than seventy paintings and sculptures are included. Through July 5. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8. Closed July 4.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Painters of a New Century: The Eight & American Art," an exhibition devoted to the work of the turn-of-the-century painters known as the Eight: Arthur B. Davies, William Glackens, Robert Henri, Ernest Lawson, George Luks, Maurice Prendergast, Everett Shinn, and John Sloan. . . . ¶ "Tacit Transit," a new installation, by Korean-born artist Jin Soo Kim, that consists of wire-mesh modules and found objects. Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ A display of first-edition etchings from Giovanni Battista Piranesi's "Carceri d'Invenzioni" group. Through July 26. . . . ¶ "Biomorphicism and Organic Abstraction in Twentieth-Century Decorative Arts." (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A large exhibition titled "Global Warming—Understanding the Forecast," which was developed by the museum and the Environmental Defense Fund. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show that documents several stages in the design of Frank Gehry's new bentwood furniture (several models of which were seen a few months ago at MOMA). Included are original drawings, prototypes, production models, photo-murals, and a history of bentwood furniture. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ "A

QUEEN ELIZABETH 2
1993 WORLD CRUISES



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ART–Cont'd

Decade of Craft" highlights works in glass and wood that the museum has recently acquired. Through July 26. . . . ¶ Three site-specific installations by Sam Gilliam, Robert Kushner, and Dale Chihuly. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, except July 4, 10 to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—Eight paintings from the "North American Trophy Room" series, by Honduran artist Francisco Alvarado-Juárez. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ The museum's twelfth "Artist in the Marketplace" exhibition includes thirty-six emerging painters, sculptors, photographers, and installation artists. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ "Contemporary Painting and Calligraphy from Japan." Through Aug. 2. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—A hundred and twenty-six photographs by the Austrian-born botanist and explorer Joseph Rock (1884-1962), who documented the cultures inhabiting the borderland between Tibet and China before the Chinese Revolution. Through July 31. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, except July 4, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 7.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Since its founding, in 1897, by the three Hewitt sisters, whose goal was to elevate taste in America, the Cooper-Hewitt has accumulated a marvellous albeit rarely displayed library of the decorative arts. On view since last summer, "A Design Resource" is a rotating sampler of nearly a thousand objects drawn from the collection. "Animals in Design" and "Designs for Seating" are among the new sections. Through Aug. 30. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, except July 4, from 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Self-portrait by Charles Garabedian

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—"An Album of Interiors" consists of more than sixty nineteenth-century watercolors, from two private family collections—one American and one European. Through Aug. 23. (Open daily, except Mondays and July 4, 10 to 6; Sundays 1 to 6.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Japanese Folk Art." The Japanese do not ordinarily distinguish between high art and popular art, but for the purposes of this exhibition folk art has been defined as the crafted objects of the lower class. Most of the materials are from the nineteenth century, an era when the influence of the West began to be felt more widely in Japan, and all are from the collection of an anonymous American living in Switzerland. There are many charming items in the show, ranging from a remarkably abstract toy hawk carved in wood to a stylized papier-mâché toy sculpture of Daruma, the legendary patriarch of Zen Buddhism. The latter piece, which looks like a Swiss cowbell, is displayed beside a huge wood temple gong. There are also some fine examples of sculpturally sophisticated wood kettlehooks and a fantastical iron teakettle that looks like a huge piece of fungus with the image of a prancing horse cast in low relief. Toward the end of the exhibition is a marvellously expressive sign for a samurai inn, whose calligraphy resembles the very warriors that it was intended to beckon. Through July 2. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Bridges and Boundaries: African-Americans and American Jews." This show—comprising three hundred and fifty art works, photographs, and documents—explores the complex relationship of coöperation and tension between the two groups. Through July 19. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5; Thursdays, 11 to 8; Fridays, 11 to 3.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Sketching at Home and Abroad" presents more than a hundred British landscape drawings and watercolors—from the literal to the lyrical—by Turner, Constable, Wilson, Gainsborough, and others. Through Aug. 2. . . . ¶ Puss in Boots, the Master Cat, is the subject of an exhibition that spans three hundred years' worth of illustrations, beginning with Charles Perrault's original manuscript of Mother Goose stories. Through Aug. 9. . . . ¶ "Leaping the Fence," a show that examines, through illustrated treatises, the development of the English landscape garden. Through Aug. 2. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, except July 4, 10:30 to 5, Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"The Art of Embellishment" features nearly fifty painted and stencilled objects—including doors, pieces of furniture, tinware, and textiles—from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American homes. Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ The American hand-carved walking stick (more varieties than you can shake one at) is the subject of "Step Lively: The Art of the Folk Cane." Through Sept. 13. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"St. Petersburg as It Was Leningrad" features forty lithographs by the Russian graphic artist Anatoly Kaplan (1902-1980). Through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ "Walt Whitman and New York." The Long Island-born Brooklynite is celebrated in a show that juxtaposes prose and poetry with nineteenth-century paintings, prints, and photographs. Through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ "Broadway! 125 Years of Musical Theatre." A large assortment of objects—including paintings, posters, scripts, models, sheet music, and memorabilia—from nearly seventy-five productions that have bowed on the Great White Way. First seen in New York at the IBM Gallery last summer. . . . ¶ An exhibition of fifty paintings, watercolors, and lithographs by the Dutch artist Adriaan Lubbers (1892-1954), whose fascination with New York City is reflected in his urban landscapes. Through July 26. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, except July 4, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Forever Wild: The Adirondack Experience" presents two hundred paintings, photographs, architectural plans, pieces of furniture, and other objects. Through July 12. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Hail, Delirium!," a show of illustrated books and prints by Dorothea Tanning. Through July 18. (Third Floor Gallery.). . . ¶ One of the more comprehensive shows in the current crop of Walt Whitman centenary celebrations is "In Life or Death Forever": a hundred and fifty manuscripts, books, photographs, and letters culled from both the Berg and Oscar Lion collections. Through Sept. 12. (Berg Exhibition Room.). . . ¶ The forays of Percy Bysshe Shelley into the political arena are chronicled in the letters, manuscripts, and bank checks on view in "Shelley: Unacknowledged Legislator." Through Aug. 8. (Edna Barnes Salomon Room.). . . ¶ "On the Edge" is a show of more than two hundred black-and-white and color photographs from the covers and pages of *Vogue*. Through Aug. 1. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall.) (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, except July 4, 10 to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Rd., Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88) designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his own sculptures. The entire range of his work is on view, from the early surrealistic biomorphic sculptures through several types of stone carvings, and including documentation of his prodigious public-art projects. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with sculptures. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed July 4.)

James Rosenquist—Rosenquist is not always thought of as one of our great painters, but this show of his early Pop paintings, from 1961 to 1964, could well inspire second thoughts about the matter. This show features a number of his more complex canvases, as well as the smoky, glamorous "The Light That Won't Fail, I." Through July 11. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. Closed July 3.)

Short List—Suzanne Bocanegra, Munroe, 9 E. 84th St. (closed Mondays, through July 3); **Richard Smith,** Feigen, 49 E. 68th St. (closed July 3, through July 20.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Ron Janowich/Frederic Thursz—Janowich has lately been playing with the shape of his canvas, and this experimentation seems to be paying off. The most interesting work is shaped like a horseshoe, a form that neatly fills one's field of vision./Thursz has covered several panels in thick, glossy paint; according to a nearby statement, the works were inspired by the death, at Dachau, of an uncle he'd met only once. A group of larger panels, displayed in a smaller gallery, are gripping. They're arranged in pairs of similar colors—two mustards, two purples—and they make for a poignant study in the dynamics of attraction. Through July 31. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Charles Garabedian—An impressive show featuring two paintings, based on the Iliad, that portray maimed soldiers in fields of an oddly uplifting yellow-green. In their scope, both suggest Picasso's "Guernica." The more striking of the two looks like some kind of geophysical catastrophe, with land and water merging into a single mass. Although the paintings depict such grotesque things as bloody limbs and the occasional stake through a heart or a neck, the figures all have the solidity of classical statuary. Also on display are numerous smaller studies, which are quite compelling on their own. Through July 10. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

Irina Nakhova—Large paintings of eyes, and small, wall-mounted sculptures of torsos with an occasional foot or shoe appropriately situated on the floor. The torsos, which have been embedded, variously, with putti, straws, and a pot of eggs, are the more ingratiating works, while the eyes, which are grisaille with colored accents, are richer, less illustrational, more mysterious. Through July 31. (Kind, 136 Greene St. Closed Mondays.)

"Technorama"—Technology is usually perceived as a threat to the individualism that art supposedly protects. In the late seventies, in an effort to come to terms with this threat, many artists attempted to master technology through reassembling its raw materials. This show combines work by some of these artists with work by like-minded younger artists. It is a pleasant enough compilation, although it could use a more substantial anchor. Julia Scher is represented by one of her predictable parodies of machine-age authority and surveillance. Dike Blair's contribution, a photomontage of obscure details snapped at Disney's EPCOT Center, is a buoyant image of free-floating unreality. The best works in the show are the oldest: two illustrations from the fifties by Alexander Leydenfrost, who worked for *Life*. They conform to the scientific boosterism of the period, a kind of surrealism intended to make such technological bogeys as nuclear reactors seem simple and friendly. Through July 10. (Toll, 146 Greene St. Closed Mondays.)

"Mssr. B's Curio Shop"—This good-natured but chaotic show provides access to dozens of artists who rarely appear on the gallery circuit. Little of the work, however, is very good. The show seems to have been simply allowed to happen; the few interesting pieces

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are nearly impossible to find. A number of Alfonso Ossorio's obsessively inclusive assemblages are scattered about, and they seem like epitomes of the show as a whole. Among the handful of standouts are Maureen Connor's sculptures of lingerie; Suzanne Anker's sculptures of figures in gymnastic positions; and Paul Thek's "Technological Reliquary," from the mid-sixties, a humorous and poignant portrayal of technology entombing the individual. Through July 11. (Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At **A/D**, 560 Broadway: A room appointed by three artists. Roy Lichtenstein's wallpaper with a living-room image is as lustreless as his recent paintings. But Gerhard Richter's colorfully gridded wall-to-wall carpeting, which is recognizably related to the artist's past work, would do any rec room proud. On the carpet sit four of Donald Judd's gorgeous plywood chairs, which are stained in crisp aniline colors and have the design simplicity of Shaker furniture. Through July 31. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Kunsthall**, 129 Greene St.: Each of the three painters here has bitten off more than he can chew. Wainer Vaccari has at least chosen a subject rife with metaphor—cockfighting. But his painting, which depicts two huge and bloody cock-a-doodlers locked in a sort of Greco-Roman clinch, is so incompetently rendered that it collapses under the weight of the Old Masterish style it tries to sustain. Fred Escher also jumbles his references, albeit a little more sensitively. He has taken a panoramic early-Italian battle scene and updated it—using a technique reminiscent of Immendorf—into a depiction of a prison camp under a lowering sky. But nothing distinguishes it from run-of-the-mill Neo-Expressionism. Donald Newman, enfant terrible of the New Wave late seventies, whose worthy first show, sensationally titled "Nigger Drawings," touched off a discussion of racism in the arts that is still raging more than a decade later, eventually abandoned art-making to pursue a career in computers. He returns here with some shaped wood constructions covered with paint-splattered sheets and pillowcases, and they're all pretty terrible. Through July 11. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.) . . . **Luhring Augustine**, 130 Prince St.: A strangely thoughtful group show, which begins with some handsome works on paper, from 1979, by the Austrian Arnulf Rainer. Each consists of two related masses of smudges, one airy and drawn by an ape, the other dense and painted by the artist. Near them is a towering sculpture by Paul McCarthy (one of the standouts of L.A. MOCA's "Helter Skelter" exhibition) which is its own kind of double whammy. It consists of two huge skunks standing on tree stumps with their erect penises in their paws. It is a bawdily funny sculpture that poaches on Koons territory while belittling the sort of craft that underlies Koons' work. Stormy charcoal drawings by Joyce Pensato serve as a bridge between Rainer and McCarthy. They depict Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, most of the figures wearing maniacal smiles, and are quite compelling, infused as they are with a thoughtful feminist anger. Also on view is a work by McCarthy consisting of a small battered trunk filled with soiled dolls. It is dated 1977-82, several years before Mike Kelley's first doll piece, and seems intended to establish McCarthy's historical priority. Through July 31. . . . **Steingladstone**, 99 Wooster St.: Nancy Rubins' sculpture "Drawings and Hot Water Heaters" is composed of just that: junked water heaters and several graphite drawings on big sheets of paper. It falls somewhere between improvised installation and constructed sculpture—between, say, Allan Kaprow and John Chamberlain. What's impressive about this and similar works, apart from their physical energy and mechanical ingenuity, is their highly evolved definition—they have real, articulated shapes, and an appeal beyond the charm of rusting parts. Rubins shares the gallery with Matthew Barney—here represented by a videotape and a wall relief, in his Cronenbergian "Dead Ringers" mode—and with a young painter named Sam Reveles, who has contributed two pretty, highly refined monochromatic abstractions. Through July 31.

Short List—**Douglas Davis**, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (closed July 6, through July 17); **Viola Frey**, Hoffman, 429 West Broadway (closed July 3, through July 31).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Traditionally, summer has been a time when many galleries organize landscape shows—the theme is loose and easygoing, which is appropriate for the relaxed atmosphere that characterizes art-world goings-on during this period. But the landscape photographs in the exhibition at the Stux gallery (at its new location, 163 Mercer Street; through July 31) are anything but loose as far as conceptual rigor is concerned. The images (by Clegg & Guttmann, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Jeff Wall, Ange Leccia, and Geoffrey James) may look like scenes casually caught, but the amount of thought behind them is obviously great. As we looked at the works, we kept thinking about that famous photograph from 1867 by Timothy O'Sullivan in which one sees a great big crack in the dry earth—a picture that was one of the first to foretell the industrialization of nature, a motif that runs through this show.

All these artists have impressed us in the past, and though this is not the first time that most of these particular pieces have been shown, it's provocative to see them grouped together in this way. Except for Geoffrey James's beautiful black-and-white scenes, there is nothing traditionally romantic in the show. The Swiss artists Fischli and Weiss, however, do have fun with romantic clichés—one of their witty contributions includes a sly poke at Anselm Kiefer's Germanic iconography. In Leccia's "Arrangements," by contrast, we see a triptych of French landscapes in which nine flames shoot up from barrels that the photographer filled with diesel fuel and sugar, and then ignited. The associations evoked here are endless—pollution, French Impressionism, Ansel Adams' pictures of geysers.

Gertrude Käsebier (1852-1934)—A small, connoisseur's treat of a show, which highlights three of the strongest forces in Käsebier's vision: narrative photographs of domestic life, portraits of her male colleagues, and portraits of Native Americans. The last have a power and a directness that we've often found lacking in Edward Curtis's pictures on this topic. In addition to the evocative subject matter of these pictures, there's a real physical pleasure to be had from the prints themselves—platinums and gum-bichromates that vary deliciously in texture and tone. Through July 14. (Museum of Modern Art.)

"On the Edge: Images from 100 Years of Vogue"—Fashion and fashionability dominate here, but there are many pieces that belie the view that these aspects of our culture are one-dimensional. Irwin Blumenfeld's 1945 color photograph "Red Cross," for instance, is a complexity of symbolism, modernism, and seduction. Through Aug. 1. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, except July 4, from 10 to 6.)

Short List—**Bill Brandt** and **Aart Klein**, Lowinsky, 575 Broadway (closed Mondays, through July 24); **Bevan Davies**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through July 31); **Alexander Gardner**, International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; through Sept. 6); **E. Ira Mc Crudden**, Wessel O'Connor, 60 Thomas St. (through July 3); **Arthur Mones**, McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through July 31); **Louis Stettner**, Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (through July 2).

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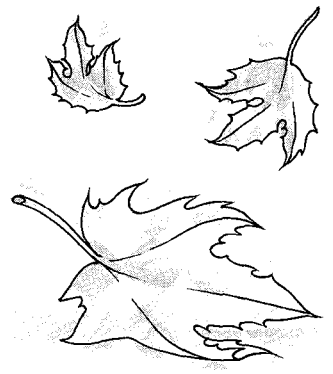
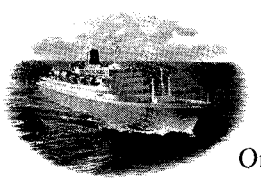


CRIMSON & GOLD
ON A
SEA OF BLUE.



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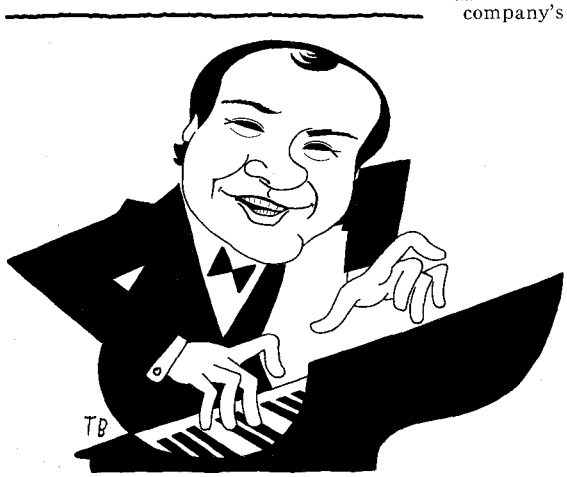
SWEEPING CHANGES

When the Times Square Business Improvement District (BID) unveiled its latest midtown enhancements on a recent Tuesday morning, the sky was blue, the speeches were short, and the prototype of the group's soon-to-be-installed tourist-information kiosks was colorful and imposing. But what was really eye-catching was the new uniform being modelled by five broom-wielding members of the BID's sanitation team: unisex, polyester-and-cotton jumpsuits and visored caps, in bright cherry red, emblazoned with Times Square logos in the same intense purple as accompanying regulation T-shirts. A short-sleeved version will serve the workers this summer; come fall, they'll be issued a long-sleeved variation, in heavier material. But, whatever the season, the tools of the team's trade will be color-coördinated with the uniforms—most notably their trash barrels (red) and liner bags (purple).

Since the outfits will become a permanent part of the theatre-district scene, it's appropriate that they should have been designed by Patricia Zipprodt, better known for having created the costumes for "Sunday in the Park with George," "Shogun: The Musical," and "Sweet Charity" (to name three of the eleven Broadway shows for which she has received Tony Award nominations). Though the workers had first stepped into their new attire only that morning and there hadn't been time for the legs of all the jumpsuits to be properly hemmed, they were already bestowing good reviews on the designer's latest project. "Until now," said Harry Roldan, who has been a member of the crew since its inception, six months ago, "we wore the same dull-blue work pants and shirts that ten thousand other people wear in New York. But now when people spy you on the street, they'll know you're part of the Times Square team. These are sharp—I mean, this is Broadway, right?"



Alexander Toradze at the Waterloo Festival

MUSIC

WHAT purpose could there possibly be in a summer festival of Tchaikovsky by the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall? If it's supposed to be a palliative for acute overexposure to another composer (the Mostly You-Know-Who Festival starts up this week, bringing to term Lincoln Center's grand year-and-a-half-long survey of the Köchel catalogue), the various summer jazz series do the job better. It's a nice idea to bring the Philharmonic back to its old Carnegie home, but the acoustical changes of a few years back mean that it won't sound the same. And, anyway, is Tchaikovsky—the Tchaikovsky of the most familiar warhorses, several of which figure in the Philharmonic's July plans—really a composer who needs sustained examination at this moment?

Replies to such questions might be impossible were it not for a performance that we happened to catch at the end of the 1991-92 season. Kurt Masur, who has seemed a sound, thoughtful leader in most of the music he has conducted here, seemed positively inspired in Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony: passionate, imaginative, full of love for the work. So maybe most of the complaints about the Philharmonic's conservative programming and hackneyed repertoire are really complaints about the performances, not the programs themselves. If the performances were more satisfying, it might not seem such a dull thing to hear variations on the usual mix of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Schumann, etc., year after year. Programming was not really more adventurous in the nineteen-thirties, but performances were, and so we eagerly seek out preserved symphonic broadcasts from that era, however familiar the music.

This is not to say that we aren't instinctively drawn to intriguing, unfamiliar programs, or that we don't wish the Philharmonic were bolder in its choices. But we take our musical satisfactions where we can find them, and Mr. Masur's conducting of Tchaikovsky will likely be one.

IN TOWN—OPERA

Kirov Opera—Opening performances of the company's two-week-long visit, with all performances conducted by Valery Gergiev and presented in Russian. July 6 at 7: Prokofiev's "The Fiery Angel," a tale of demonic possession unloosed within a sado-masochistic ménage à trois. . . . ¶ July 7-8 at 8: Tchaikovsky's "The Queen of Spades," a cautionary tale for gamblers, in which three cards lead to three fatalities, in three acts. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 18, with these two operas running in repertory with Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov.")

New York Grand Opera—Vincent La Selva leads "The Marriage of Figaro," in a staged production, in English. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 8 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

IN TOWN—CONCERTS

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts an all-Tchaikovsky concert: the "Capriccio Italien," the Symphony No. 4, and the Violin Concerto (featuring Midori). (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. July 8-9 at 8.). . . **NOTE:** In pre-concert recitals, beginning both nights at 6:45 and open to ticketholders, members of the orchestra will play Tchaikovsky's D-Major String Quartet (Op. 11).

Bargemusic—Anne-Marie McDermott performs Norman Dello Joio's Third Piano Sonata; Daniel Gaisford joins her in Barber's Cello Sonata; and violinist Kerry McDermott completes the ensemble for Dvořák's F-Minor Piano Trio (Op. 65). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. July 2-3 at 7:30 and July 5 at 4.)

Goldman Memorial Band—Gene Young conducts Handel's "Music for the Royal Fireworks," Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture," and works by such American composers as Victor Herbert, Richard Rodgers, Roy Harris, and Morton Gould. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. July 3 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Summergarden at MOMA—For the next nine weeks, students and recent graduates from Juilliard will spend their Friday and Saturday evenings exploring the works of the octogenarian composer (or "inventor," as he tends to put it) John Cage. The outdoor location can be far from quiet, but the city's background noise may well find its match in the performing forces for the series' opening concert: a quartet of percussionists, rendering Cage's "Four[4]," written within the past year. (Sculpture Garden, Museum of Modern Art, 14 W. 54th St. July 3-4 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

New York Pops—Skitch Henderson conducts light favorites, including Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture." (South Street Seaport, Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. July 4 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Carillon—Recitals on the carillon of the Riverside Church, which includes among its seventy-four bells a "bourdon" which, weighing in at twenty tons, is the heaviest carillon bell in the world. July 5 at 3: Hans Uwe Hielscher, from the Marktkirche in Wiesbaden, Germany. . . . ¶ July 7 at 6:30: Frank Deleu, the city carillonneur of Kortrijk and Menen, Belgium. (Riverside Dr. at 120th St. No tickets necessary.)

David Hurd—Organist, performing toccatas by Buxtehude and Bach, Reger's "Variations and Fugue on an Original Theme" (Op. 73), and his own "Arioso and Finale." (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 7 at 7. Admission by contribution.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—This year's season, which will run through Aug. 22, marks the culmination of the Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Center. In the opening concerts, Gerard Schwarz conducts the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra in an all-Mozart program comprising the Symphonies No. 31 (the "Paris") and No. 34, the Violin Concerto No. 5 (with Anne-Sophie Mutter), and three concert arias (featuring soprano Barbara Hendricks). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. July 7 at 8:30 and July 8 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

Tanglewood—July 2 at 8:30: The Beaux Arts Trio performs chamber music by Haydn, Ned Rorem, and Dvořák (his "Dumky" Trio). . . . ¶ July 3 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducts the Boston Symphony in Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 ("From the New World"), Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 (with Anne-Sophie Mutter as soloist), and a movement from Messiaen's "Turangalîla-symphonie.". . . ¶ July 4 at 7: Arlo Guthrie, Judy Collins, and fireworks. . . . ¶ July 5 at 2:30: Roger Norrington conducts the Boston Symphony and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus in Walton's oratorio "Belshazzar's Feast" (with baritone soloist Victor Ledbetter). Also on the concert are Berlioz' "Le Corsaire" Overture and Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy" (with the latter featuring violinist Midori). (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

Rutgers SummerFest—July 1: Peter Phillips directs the Tallis Scholars in Renaissance choral music. . . . ¶ July 6: Robert Kapilow lectures on Renaissance music. . . . ¶ July 8: Baritone Jerrold Pope and harpsichordist Charlotte Mattax, plus an assisting period-instrument ensemble, perform Renaissance and early-Baroque vocal and instrumental

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works. (Evenings at 8. Nicholas Music Center, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. For information about tickets, call 1-908 932-7511.)

Caramoor Music Festival—July 2 at 4:15: Pianist Alexander Paley performs Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata, as well as works by Chopin, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff. . . . ¶ July 3 at 8:30: The Cassatt String Quartet plays quartets by Beethoven (in G Major, Op. 18, No. 2) and Ravel; pianist Peter Basquin joins them for Dohnányi's Quintet (Op. 26). . . . ¶ July 4 at 8:30: Soprano Maureen McGovern renders classic American popular songs, backed up by the Coffee Club Orchestra (with Rob Fisher conducting). . . . ¶ July 5 at 5:30: Frederick Renz directs the Ensemble for Early Music in music from fifteenth-century England, Italy, Spain, and Burgundy. (Katonah, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 1-914 232-1252.)

Opera Festival of New Jersey—July 2 at 8: "Madame Butterfly," in Puccini's early "Brescia" version, fully staged, and performed in English. . . . ¶ July 5 at 3: "The Merry Widow," fully staged, in English. (Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J. For information about tickets, call 1-609 936-1500.)

Norfolk Chamber Music Festival—July 3 at 8:30: The Tokyo String Quartet performs Beethoven's A-Major Quartet (Op. 18, No. 5), Takemitsu's "A way a lone," and Schumann's Piano Quintet (with pianist Lilian Kallir). . . . ¶ July 5 at 3: The Cleveland String Quartet performs quartets by Beethoven (in B-Flat Major, Op. 18, No. 6), Prokofiev (his First), and Dvořák (in A-Flat Major, Op. 105). (Route 44, Norfolk, Conn. For information about tickets, call 1-203 542-5537.)

Waterloo Festival Orchestra—In the opening concert of the festival's seventeenth season (which will run through Aug. 8), Gerard Schwarz conducts William Schuman's Symphony No. 3, Rachmaninoff's "Vocalise" (in the composer's own orchestral transcription), and Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 (featuring Alexander Toradze). (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. For information about tickets, call 1-201 347-4700. July 4 at 8:30.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Sonic Youth/Sun Ra—Although it's not just a grunge outfit, a lot of people thought that Sonic Youth would be the band to catch the bullet of neo-punk stardom that Nirvana, their labelmate on Geffen Records, rode to the top earlier this year. "Goo," Sonic Youth's last album, contained nothing as catchy as "Smells Like Teen Spirit," but it was a swinging, fascinating maelstrom of modulated chaos from beginning to end. Their favorite subject is American life as a nightmare, but they're never stuck in automatic transgression; Sonic Youth has the rare ability to make you squirm, laugh, and rock out in the course of a song. Meanwhile, it's just as well that the brilliant and eccentric jazz hippie Sun Ra believes in myriad parallel universes, because his wild, cosmic-themed big band, the Intergalactic Arkestra, has about as much in common with Sonic Youth as Saturn does with Mars. Sun Ra's space chants and the Arkestra's polychrome robes and hats are good fun, but the music is no joke; this is one of the hottest large jazz aggregations around. (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 4 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Boukman Eksperyans—With Manno Charlemagne. (Central Park SummerStage. July 5 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Los Pleneros de la 21—Y.W.C.A., Lexington Ave. at 53rd St. 755-4500. July 1 at 6:30.

Jimmy Buffett—Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. July 7 at 8.

Brave Combo—World Financial Center Plaza, Battery Park City. July 8 at 7:30. No tickets necessary. (Rain date, July 9 at 7:30.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Kansas City Royals, June 29-30 at 7:30 and July 1 at 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the Minnesota Twins, July 6-8 at 7:30.

Mets—Vs. the Houston Astros, July 3 at 7:40, July 4 at 7:10, and July 5 at 1:40.

(The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000; and the Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Suburban Handicap is on July 4. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays, except Mondays and Thursdays, at 1:05. . . . At Atlantic City Race Course: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:25. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:15. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

ART lovers whose appetite for the work of Frank Lloyd Wright has been sharpened by the reopening of the Guggenheim Museum can sample further vintage Wright, on a more intimate scale, at Tiffany & Co. (Fifth Avenue at 57th Street; through September 5). In honor of the hundred-and-twenty-fifth anniversary of the artist's birth, Tiffany's has re-created four Wright-designed dining areas. They're what decorators active during Wright's youth might have called "vignettes," collections of furnishings substantial enough to define a stylistic intent.

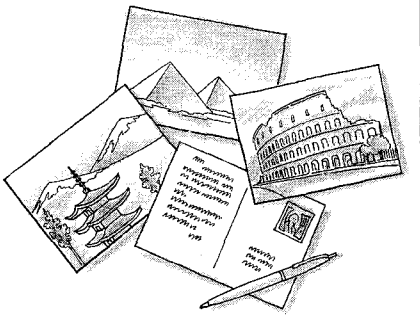
The breeziest of the settings, which graces the store's third floor, is an outdoor patio from Chicago's Midway Gardens; a wiry red table is set with vibrant china in a pattern that's called Cabaret but is more evocative of an ebullient circus. Dining rooms of three private residences share the second floor. From Coonley Playhouse (a Prairie House, in Riverside, Illinois, originally designed as a school, in 1912), undoubtedly comfortable barrel chairs sit beneath one of the artist's most acclaimed art-glass window patterns. Hexagons abound in the chairs and candlesticks from Wingspread (another Prairie House, in Racine, Wisconsin, from 1937). And one can almost imagine a party of four at Taliesin (the artist's own Wisconsin home, built in 1911), leaning back against the elongated spindles of their Robie chairs after finishing their dessert—here, a birthday cake in the shape of the house itself.

The Glorious Fourth—This year, in addition to all the usual patriotic activities, like softball and barbecues, New Yorkers will be able to enjoy a parade of tall ships, which will set sail at 9 A.M. from the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and continue up the Hudson River to the George Washington Bridge in celebration of the five-hundredth anniversary year of Columbus's landing. Cap your day with a stroll along the Battery Park Promenade to the edge of the Hudson River. There, from the deck of a barge (at 9:20), the party-happy Macy's folks will ignite more than ten thousand shells, resulting in fireworks shaped like butterflies, silver swallows, and peonies.

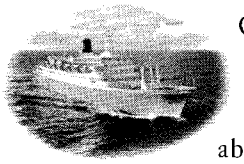
Swing Dancing—The people at Lincoln Center present evenings of dancing outdoors, by the fountain. July 1: The Frank Wess big band. . . . ¶ July 2: Roomful of Blues. . . . ¶ July 3: Barbara Lea and Dick Hyman, with Vince Giordano's Nighthawks. . . . ¶ July 4: Peter Duchin and his orchestra. . . . ¶ July 8: The Tim Gillis band. (Evenings at 8:15. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, dance lessons are offered at 6:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5400.)

Talk—Stephen Brier will talk about how Americans experience history through television miniseries. (Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. July 8 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

SAGAFJORD 1993
WORLD CRUISE



AROUND THE WORLD, AT A LEISURELY PACE.



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CUNARD

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Perhaps the one thing worse than dying is outliving your money.

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It may well be your worst fear.

Far more frightening to us, however, is how few people are being told what the future has in store and how to plan for it.

Our purpose in bringing to you the following information isn't to scare you, but merely to help prepare you.

You're probably going to live a lot longer than you think.

Not so long ago, if you were lucky enough to live to retirement age, you'd have very little time left to worry about providing for it.

Today, if you reach the age of 55, and you almost certainly will, the odds are that you'll live until you're 77 years old. And, while the median life span is constantly increasing, the median retirement age is constantly decreasing.

Most people now retire at a little over 60, leaving them with 17 non-working years to provide for. Of course, you could live a lot longer.

To have your birthday announced on NBC's "Today Show," it would help to be 105; there are just too many people celebrating their 100th birthday to mention them all.

Social Security will only pay for a small fraction of your retirement needs.

Despite all the dire predictions, we believe Social Security will be around to help you in some form.

But, you can't let it give you a false sense of security; the current maximum benefit is just $1,088 per month.

If you are fortunate enough to have a company pension plan, this can help too, although on average, it will only account for another 16% of your needs.

There's one other nasty number that will factor into everybody's future: the rate of inflation. For the period 1967–1990, the average rate of inflation was 6.3%, which dwindled the purchasing power of $30,000 held uninvested to just $7,500.

There are also a number of other phenomena to consider that could prove to be a drain on your finances.

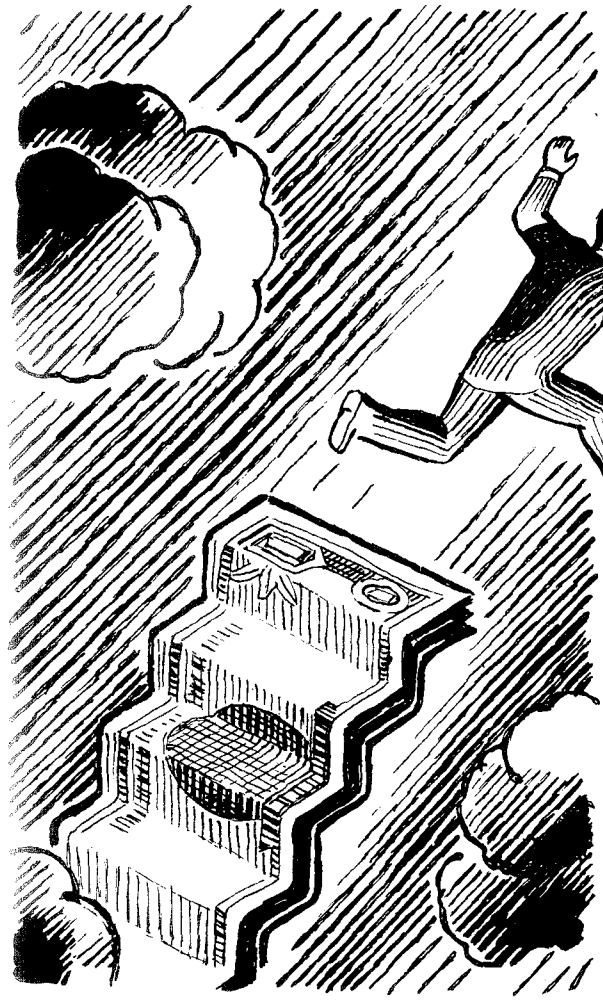
For example, in the future it won't be so unusual for your retired parents to still be alive when you retire.

And if, like a lot of other people, you had children late in life, you could be paying for college at the time people used to save the most for their retirement.

It's not just how much you save, it's how much money your savings earn.

If you've read this far, it should be painfully obvious that you don't need us or any other financial institution to simply tell you to save for your future.

The return for investing wisely can be a much richer retirement.



A few percentage points may not seem like much in the short term, but, as we've already established, you're in this for the long term.

$50,000 returning 8% instead of a paltry 4% would yield $124,000 more over 20 years.

Take advantage of a tax-deferred plan by not only reinvesting the interest, but also the untaxed interest, and you'll see an even bigger return. (The government taxes you enough, don't they?)

A $2,000 annual contribution to an IRA earning 8% will add up to $98,846 over 20 years. In a taxable account it will only accumulate $73,743.*

And what many people think of as the riskiest investment may be your safest bet of all: the stock market.

Over the last 65 years, the *Standard & Poor's* 500 produced an average annual total return of 10.4%.

If it continues to perform in the same way, $50,000 invested with only average success would be worth $361,702 in 20 years, assuming reinvestment of dividends.

Of course, one of the first principles of building your principal is designing a balanced portfolio. This could, for instance, include cash, bonds, moderate and aggressive growth equities, tangible assets and international investments. And your greatest asset will be a financial advisor you can trust.

Your golden years can be truly golden.

At Prudential Securities we don't think you should spend your later life counting loose change. Your objective should be to enjoy retirement, not simply survive it. As such, financial planning is too important to be done by "clipping a coupon" or left to amateurs.

To this end, we have Prudential Securities Branch Offices throughout the country. And if you make an appointment with a Prudential Securities Financial Advisor, he or she will take as long as it takes to get a thorough understanding of your total financial picture.

Only then can we tailor a financial strategy that fits your personal needs, aspirations and security.

And you don't have to bring your checkbook: this service is free. (It always has been.)

If you have any questions or would like the address of your nearest Prudential Securities Branch Office, feel free to call us at 1-800-654-5454, ext. 1331.

We also have offices in every major financial center around the world, if they can be of any help to you.

Someone said something recently that we think is worth remembering.

A famous actor's parting advice to the world was, "Live every day."

We'd like to add, "And plan to afford to live every day to the fullest."

Prudential Securities

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Pepi, Luci, Bom" (1980, directed by Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish), with Carmen Maura.
Theatre 2: "Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).
Theatre 3: "Hear My Song" (†).
Theatre 4: "Zentropa" (Lars Von Trier, in English and German), with Jean-Marc Barr, Barbara Sukowa, and Eddie Constantine.
Theatre 5: "Night on Earth" (†).
Theatre 6: "Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French), with Dominique Pinon and Marie-Laure Dougnac.

LITTLE THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"Cousin Bobby" (†); and "The Music Tells You" (Chris Hegedus and D. A. Pennebaker), a documentary about Branford Marsalis.

NEWMAN THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through July 2 (tentative): "Chimes at Midnight" ("Falstaff"; 1967, Orson Welles), with Welles, Jeanne Moreau, Margaret Rutherford, John Gielgud, Marina Vlady, Alan Webb, Walter Chiari, and Keith Baxter.
July 3-5: "Le Amiche" (1955, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian) and "Turné" (1989, Gabriele Salvatores; in Italian).
July 6: Theatre closed.
From July 7: "Un Borghese Piccolo Piccolo" (1977, Mario Monicelli; in Italian) and "Regalo di Natale" (1986, Pupi Avati; in Italian).

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 2: "Basic Instinct" (Paul Verhoeven), with Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone.
Theatre 3: "Unlawful Entry" (Jonathan Kaplan), with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta, and Madeleine Stowe.

LOEWS VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Patriot Games" (†).
Theatre 2: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 3: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 4: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 5: "Patriot Games" (†).
Theatre 6: Through June 30: "Batman Returns" (†). From July 1: "A League of Their Own" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Madonna, and Lori Petty.
Theatre 7: Through June 30: "Poison Ivy" (Katt Shea Ruben), with Tom Skerritt, Sara Gilbert, Cheryl Ladd, and Drew Barrymore. From July 1: "A League of Their Own."

CINEMA VILLAGE 12TH STREET, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"L'Élégant Criminel" (Francis Girod, in French), with Daniel Auteuil.

VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Toto le Heros" (Jaco Van Dormael; in French), with Michel Bouquet.
Theatre 2: "The Adjuster" (Atom Egoyan).
Theatre 3: "Daughters of the Dust" (1991, Julie Dash).
Theatre 4: "Cabeza de Vaca" (Nicolas Echevarria; in Spanish).
Theatre 5: "Lovers" (Vicente Aranda, in Spanish), with Victoria Abril, Jorge Sanz, and Maribel Verdu.
Theatre 6: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 7: "Pinocchio" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE 3RD AVENUE, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
Through July 2: "The Fourth Animation Celebration: The Movie."
From July 3: "The Castle of Cagliostro" (Hayao Miyazaki), an animated film.

LOEWS 19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Basic Instinct" (Paul Verhoeven), with Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone.
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 3: Through June 30: "Thunderheart" (Michael Apted), with Val Kilmer, Sam Shepard, Graham Greene, and Fred Ward. From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.
Theatre 4: Through June 30: "Deep Cover" (Bill Duke), with Larry Fishburne and Jeff Goldblum. From July 1: "Boomerang."

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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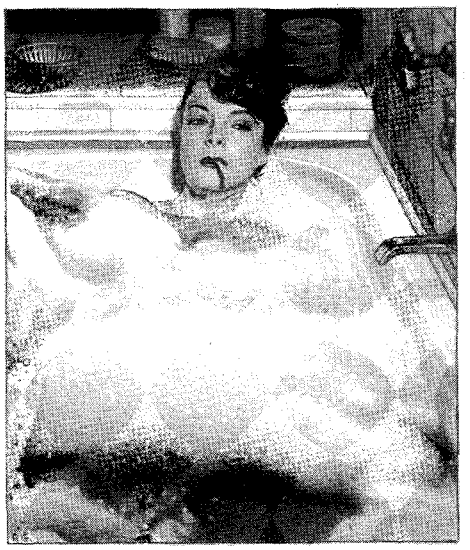
FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.



At Le Cinematographe, Jean Peters in "Pickup on South Street"

Theatre 5: Through June 30: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang."
Theatre 6: "Class Act" (†).

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The Playboys" (†).

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through June 30: "Alien³" (†).
From July 1: "A League of Their Own" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Madonna, and Lori Petty.

MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 2: Through June 30: "Basic Instinct" (Paul Verhoeven), with Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone. From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.
Theatre 3: Through June 30: "Far and Away" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang."
Theatre 4: "Pinocchio" (†).

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 2: "Patriot Games" (†).
Theatre 3: "Batman Returns" (†).

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Housesitter" (†).

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Mambo Kings" (Arne Glimcher), with Armand Assante, Antonio Banderas, and Cathy Moriarty.

SUTTON 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Pinocchio" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lovers" (Vicente Aranda, in Spanish), with Victoria Abril, Jorge Sanz, and Maribel Verdu.

CROWN GOTHAM, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Unlawful Entry" (Jonathan Kaplan), with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta, and Madeleine Stowe.

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"A Woman's Tale" (Paul Cox), with Sheila Florance.

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through June 30: "Class Act" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.
Theatre 2: Through June 30: "Class Act" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang."

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Deep Cover" (Bill Duke), with Larry Fishburne and Jeff Goldblum.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Far and Away" (†).
Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (†).

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 2: "For Sasha" (Alexandre Arcady, in French), with Sophie Marceau and Richard Berry.
Theatre 3: "The Playboys" (†).

ART EAST CINEMA, 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)
"Hear My Song" (†).

FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "My Cousin Vinny" (Jonathan Lynn), with Joe Pesci.
Theatre 2: "Alien³" (†).
Theatre 3: "Alien³" (†).
Theatre 4: "Wayne's World" (Penelope Spheeris), with Mike Myers, Dana Carvey, and Rob Lowe.
Theatre 5: "The Waterdance" (†).
Theatre 6: Through June 30: "Alien³" (†). From July 1: "Basic Instinct" (Paul Verhoeven), with Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone.

GEMINI 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 2: "Batman Returns" (†).

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Player" (†).

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 2: "Patriot Games" (†).

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through June 30: Theatre closed.
From July 1: "A League of Their Own" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Madonna, and Lori Petty.

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Patriot Games" (†).

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Housesitter" (†).
Theatre 2: "Unlawful Entry" (Jonathan Kaplan), with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta, and Madeleine Stowe.

LOEWS ORPHEUM VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 2: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 3: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 4: Through June 30: "Far and Away" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.
Theatre 5: Through June 30: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang."
Theatre 6: "Class Act" (†).
Theatre 7: "Batman Returns" (†).

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Pinocchio" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sister Act" (†).

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through June 30: "The Inland Sea" (directed by Lucille Carra; in English and Japanese) and "Unknown Soldiers" (Veronika Soul; in English and Japanese). From July 1: "Blast 'Em" (Joseph Blasioli), a documentary.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Wisecracks" (†).

WAVERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Alien³" (†).
Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (†).

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "The Player" (†).
Theatre 2: Through June 30: "Far and Away" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Waterdance" (†).
Theatre 2: "Proof" (Jocelyn Moorhouse), with Hugo Weaving, Genevieve Picot, and Russell Crowe.
Theatre 3: "Europa Europa" (Agnieszka Holland, in German and Russian).

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Theatre 4: "Raise the Red Lantern" (Zhang Yimou; in Chinese).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 2: "Patriot Games" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 4: "Unlawful Entry" (Jonathan Kaplan), with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta, and Madeleine Stowe.
Theatre 5: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 6: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 7: "Housesitter" (†).
Theatre 8: "Unlawful Entry."
Theatre 9: Through June 30: "Patriot Games" (†). From July 1: "A League of Their Own" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Madonna, and Lori Petty.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Player" (†).
Theatre 2: "Far and Away" (†).
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "Pinocchio" (†); and (evenings only) "Alien^3" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Pinocchio" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: Through June 30: "My Cousin Vinny" (Jonathan Lynn), with Joe Pesci. From July 1: "Far and Away" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Playboys" (†).
Theatre 3: "Housesitter" (†).
Theatre 4: "Class Act" (†).
Theatre 5: "Where Angels Fear to Tread" (Charles Sturridge), with Helena Bonham Carter, Judy Davis, Rupert Graves, Giovanni Guidelli, Barbara Jefford, and Helen Mirren.
Theatre 6: "The Player" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through June 30: "Far and Away" (†).
From July 1: "A League of Their Own" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Madonna, and Lori Petty.

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Fried Green Tomatoes" (Jon Avnet), with Kathy Bates, Jessica Tandy, Mary-Louise Parker, and Mary Stuart Masterson.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Zentropa" (Lars Von Trier, in English and German), with Jean-Marc Barr, Barbara Sukowa, and Eddie Constantine.

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French).
Theatre 2: Through June 30: "Mississippi Masala" (Mira Nair), with Denzel Washington and Sarita Choudhury. From July 1: "Night on Earth" (†).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"Howards End" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Proof" (Jocelyn Moorhouse), with Hugo Weaving, Genevieve Picot, and Russell Crowe.

Loews Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Mediterraneo" (Gabriele Salvatores, in Italian).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
Through June 30: "Night on Earth" (†).
From July 1: "A League of Their Own" (Penny Marshall), with Tom Hanks, Geena Davis, Madonna, and Lori Petty.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Raise the Red Lantern" (Zhang Yimou; in Chinese).
Theatre 2: "The Hairdresser's Husband" (Patrice Leconte, in French), with Jean Rochefort and Anna Galiena.
Theatre 3: "Monster in a Box" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Unlawful Entry" (Jonathan Kaplan), with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta, and Madeleine Stowe.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Patriot Games" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 3: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 4: "Sister Act" (†).
Theatre 5: Through June 30: "The Player" (†). From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.
Theatre 6: "Batman Returns" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Alien^3" (†).
Theatre 2: "Housesitter" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "Pinocchio" (†); and (evenings only) "Class Act" (†).
Theatre 2: "Far and Away" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Alien^3" (†).
Theatre 2: "Alien^3" (†).
Theatre 3: "Basic Instinct" (directed by Paul Verhoeven), with Michael Douglas and Sharon Stone.
Theatre 4: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 5: "Batman Returns" (†).
Theatre 6: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).
Theatre 7: "Lethal Weapon 3" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Sister Act" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: Through June 30: "Aces: Iron Eagle III" (John Glen), with Louis Gossett, Jr. From July 1: "Boomerang" (Reginald Hudlin), with Eddie Murphy, Halle Berry, and Robin Givens.
Theatre 2: Through June 30: "Wayne's World" (Penelope Spheeris), with Mike Myers, Dana Carvey, and Rob Lowe. From July 1: "Boomerang."
Theatre 3: Through June 30: "Encino Man" (Les Mayfield), with Sean Astin, Brendan Fraser, and Megan Ward. From July 1: "Boomerang."

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Patriot Games" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Unlawful Entry" (Jonathan Kaplan), with Kurt Russell, Ray Liotta, and Madeleine Stowe.
Theatre 2: "Unlawful Entry."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Le Cinematographe, 15 Vandam St. (675-4680)
June 29: "The Killers" (1946, directed by Robert Siodmak), with Burt Lancaster, Ava Gardner, Edmond O'Brien, Albert Dekker, and Sam Levene; and "Brute Force" (1947, Jules Dassin), with Lancaster and Hume Cronyn.
June 30-July 1: "Fear in the Night" (Maxwell Shane), with Paul Kelly, DeForest Kelley, and Ann Doran; and "The Leopard Man" (1943, Jacques Tourneur), with Dennis O'Keefe, Jean Brooks, and Margo.
July 2-3: "Amazing Mr. X" (1949, Bernard Vorhaus), with Turhan Bey, Lynn Bari, and Cathy O'Donnell; and "The Seventh Victim" (1943, Mark Robson), with Tom Conway, Kim Hunter, and Jean Brooks.
July 4: "The Woman in the Window" (1944, Fritz Lang), with Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett, Dan Duryea, and Raymond Massey; and "The Reckless Moment" (1949, Max Ophuls), with James Mason and Bennett.
July 5: "The Prowler" (1951, Joseph Losey), with Van Heflin, Evelyn Keyes, and John Maxwell; and "Act of Violence" (1949, Fred Zinnemann), with Heflin, Robert Ryan, and Janet Leigh.
July 6-7: "The Killer Is Loose" (1956, Budd Boetticher), with Joseph Cotten, Rhonda Fleming, and Wendell Corey; and "Witness to Murder" (1954, Roy Rowland), with Barbara Stanwyck, George Sanders, and Gary Merrill.
From July 8: "Pickup on South Street" (1953, Samuel Fuller), with Richard Widmark, Jean Peters, and Thelma Ritter; and "Shack Out on 101" (see page 18).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
Through June 30: "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1951, Elia Kazan), with Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando, Karl Malden, and Kim Hunter; and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis.
July 1-2: "Life Is Sweet" (Mike Leigh), with Alison Steadman, Jim Broadbent, Claire Skinner, Jane Horrocks, and Timothy Spall; and "High Hopes" (1988, Leigh).
July 3-4: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964, Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, and Slim Pickens; and "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962, John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh, Angela Lansbury, and James Gregory.
July 5-7: "Beauty and the Beast" (Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise), a Walt Disney animated film; and "Beauty and the Beast" (1946, Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Josette Day, Marcel André, and Michel Auclair.
From July 8: "The Prince of Tides"(Barbra Streisand), with Streisand, Nick Nolte, and Blythe Danner; and "Bugsy" (Barry Levinson), with Warren Beatty, Annette Bening, Harvey Keitel, Ben Kingsley, Elliott Gould, and Joe Mantegna.

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
June 29-30: "Last Date—Eric Dolphy" (1992, Hans Hylkema), a documentary.
July 1: "Dancing Man—Peg Leg Bates" (1992, Dave Davidson), a documentary; and film clips of Bill Robinson, Buck & Bubbles, the Nicholas Brothers, and others.
July 2: Film clips of Louis Jourdan, Fats Waller, and other jazz artists.
July 3-7: "Detour" (1945, Edgar G. Ulmer), with Ann Savage and Tom Neal; and "The Narrow Margin" (†).
From July 8: "Kiss of Death" (†) and "Night and the City" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
June 29: "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned"; 1950, Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish); and "Viridiana" (1961, Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal and Silvia Pinal.
June 30: "Jezebel" (1938, William Wyler), with Bette Davis, Henry Fonda, George Brent, and Fay Bainter; and "The Letter" (1940, Wyler), with Davis, Herbert Marshall, James Stephenson, Frieda Inescort, and Gale Sondergaard.
July 1: "Bullitt" (1968, Peter Yates), with Steve McQueen, Robert Vaughn, and Jacqueline Bisset; and "The Friends of Eddie Coyle" (1973, Yates), with Robert Mitchum, Peter Boyle, and Richard Jordan.
July 2: "Fury" (1936, Fritz Lang), with Spencer Tracy, Sylvia Sidney, Walter Abel, and Bruce Cabot; and "Scarlet Street" (1946, Lang), with Joan Bennett, Edward G. Robinson, and Dan Duryea.
July 3-4: "Stardust Memories" (1980, Woody Allen), with Allen, Charlotte Rampling, Jessica Harper, Marie-Christine Barrault, and Tony Roberts; and "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex" (1972, Woody Allen), with Allen.
July 5: "Le Jour se Lève" (1939, 1939, Marcel Carné; in French); and "Bizarre, Bizarre" (†).
July 6: "Rashomon" (1951, Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, and Takashi Shimura; and "Dodes'ka-den" (1971, Kurosawa; in Japanese).
July 7: "Home from the Hill" (1960, Vincente Minnelli), with Robert Mitchum, Eleanor Parker, George Hamilton, and George Peppard; and "The Night of the Hunter" (1955, Charles Laughton), with Mitchum, Shelley Winters, and Lillian Gish.
July 8: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann; and "Grand Hotel" (1932, Edmund Goulding), with Garbo, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, and Wallace Beery.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—June 29 at 2:30: "Pather Panchali" (1954, directed by Satyajit Ray; in Bengali). . . . ¶ June 29 at 3: "Alexander Nevsky" (1938, Sergei Eisenstein; in Russian), with Nikolai Cherkassov. . . . ¶ June 29 at 6: "Lucia" (1968, Humberto Solás; a Cuban film, in Spanish), with Raquel Revuelta. . . ¶ June 29 at 6 and July 4 at 2:30: "Ivan's Childhood" (1962, Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 30 at 2:30 and July 2 at 6: "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, and Jarl Kulle. . . . ¶ June 30 at 3: "Goodbye, Boys" (1966, M. Kalik; in Russian). . . . ¶ June 30 at 6 and July 2 at 2:30: "The Ballad of Narayama" (1983, Shohei Imamura; in Japanese). . . . ¶ June 30 at 6 and July 3 at 3: "Invocation" (1968, Tengiz Abuladze; in Georgian). . . . ¶ July 2 at 3: "The Beginning of an Unknown Era" (1967, Larisa Shepitko and Andrei Smirnov; in Russian). . . . ¶ July 2 at 6 and July 7 at 3: "The Seventh Bullet" (1977, Ali Khamrayev; in Uzbek). . . . ¶ July 3 at 2:30 and July 5 at 5: "Salaam Bombay!" (1988, Mira Nair; in Hindi). . . . ¶ July 3 at 6 and July 5 at 2: "The Passenger" (1963, Andrzej Munk; in English and Polish). . . . ¶ July 3 at 6: "Farewell" (1982, Elem Klimov; in Russian). . . . ¶ July 4 at 2 and July 6 at 6: "Divorce—Italian Style" (1962, Pietro Germi; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni. . . . ¶ July 4 at 5 and July 6 at 2:30: "Days of Heaven" (1978, Terrence Malick), with Richard Gere, Brooke Adams, Sam Shepard, Linda Manz, and Robert Wilke. . . . ¶ July 4 at 5: "My Friend Ivan Lapshin" (1982, Aleksei Gher-

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

man; in Russian).... ¶ July 5 at 2:30: "The Evening Sacrifice" (1984-87, Alexander Sukorov; in Russian) and "The Black Square" (1988, Joseph Pasternack; in Russian), both documentaries.... ¶ July 5 at 5: "The Ascent" (1977, Larisa Shepitkpo; in Russian).... ¶ July 6 at 3: "Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors" (1964, Sergei Paradjanov; in Ukrainian).... ¶ July 6 at 6: "King Lear" (1971, Grigory Kozintsev; in Russian).... ¶ July 7 at 2:30: "The Firemen's Ball" (1967, Milos Forman; in Czech).... ¶ July 7 at 6: "Stranger Than Paradise" (1984, Jim Jarmusch), with John Lurie, Eszter Balint, and Richard Edson.... ¶ July 7 at 6: "Second Circle" (1990, Alexander Sukorov; in Russian).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—June 29 at 2, 5:30 and 9, and June 30 at 4: "A Propos de Nice" (1930, Jean Vigo), "Taris" (1931, Vigo), and "Zéro de Conduite" (1933, Vigo; in French).... ¶ June 29 at 3:45 and 7:15, and June 30 at 5:45: "L'Atalante" (1934, Vigo; in French), with Michel Simon.... ¶ June 30 at 2, 7:30 and 9:30: "The Mozart Brothers" (1986, Suzanne Osten).... ¶ July 1 at 2 and 6 and July 2 at 4: "Grand Channel" (1983, Friederike Pezold).... ¶ July 1 at 4, 8, and 9:30 and July 2 at 2, 6, 8, and 9:30: "Heaven or Hell" (1990, Wolfgang Murnberger).... ¶ July 3 at 2 and 6:30 and July 4 at 4:15 and 9: "God Doesn't Believe in Us Anymore, Part I" (1982, Alex Corti).... ¶ July 3 at 4:15 and 8:45, July 4 at 2, and July 5 at 4:15: "Santa Fe, Part II" (1985, Corti).... ¶ July 4 at 6:30 and July 5 at 2, 6:30, and 9: "Welcome to Vienna, Part III" (1986, Corti).... ¶ July 6 at 2 and 6 and July 7 at 4, 7:30, and 9:15: "The Seventh Continent" (1989, Michael Haneke).... ¶ July 6 at 4 and 8 and July 7 at 2 and 5:45: "Caracas" (1989, Michael Schottenberg).... ¶ July 8 at 2, 5:30, and 9: "Toward Jerusalem" (1990, Ruth Beckerman).... ¶ July 8 at 3:45 and 7:15: "Good News" (1990, Ulrich Seldl).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 1 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (1953, Jacques Tati; in French), with Tati.... ¶ July 8 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "My Father's Glory" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—"Jim Henson's World of Television." "Fraggle Rock: Honk of Honks" (1986) and "Down at Fraggle Rock... Behind the Scenes" (1987). Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays (except July 4) at 1.... ¶ "The Jim Henson Hour: Dog City" (1989) and "The Storyteller: The Soldier and Death" (1989). Showings Saturdays (except July 4) and Sundays at 3:30.

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—June 30 at noon: "Route One USA" (1989, Robert Kramer).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—July 2 at 6 and 9: "Judge Priest" (†).... ¶ July 2 at 7:30 and 10:30: "The First Legion" (1951, Douglas Sirk), with Charles Boyer, William Demarest, and Barbara Rush.... ¶ July 3 at 6 and 10: "Night of the Living Dead" (1968, George A. Romero).... ¶ July 3 at 7:45: "Gertrud" (1965, Carl Dreyer; in Danish), with Nina Pens Rode.... ¶ July 4 at 1 and 6:30: "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, and Jarl Kulle.... ¶ July 4 at 3 and 8:30: "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (1953, Jacques Tati; in French), with Tati.... ¶ July 4 at 4:45 and 10: "Bread, Love and Dreams" (1954, Luigi Comencini; in Italian), with Vittorio De Sica.... ¶ July 5 at 1 and 7: "House by the River" (1950, Fritz Lang), with Louis Hayward, Jane Wyatt, Lee Bowman, and Dorothy Patrick.... ¶ July 5 at 2:45 and 8:45: "The Blue Gardenia" (1953, Fritz Lang), with Anne Baxter, Richard Conte, and Ann Sothern.... ¶ July 5 at 4:30: "Hangmen Also Die" (1943, Fritz Lang), with Brian Donlevy and Walter Brennan.

Symphony Space, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—July 8 at 7: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, Louis Salou, Marcel Herrand, Pierre Renoir, and Maria Casarès.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdan Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 8 at 8: "Metropolis" (1926, Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm, Alfred Abel, Gustav Frölich, Rudolf Klein-Rogge, Fritz Rasp, and Heinrich George. Organ accompaniment written and played by Lee Erwin.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Boston saloon Cheers isn't the only haven in pop culture "where everybody knows your name." There's also the lived-in dive in "Shack Out on 101" (playing July 8-9, at Le Cinematographe). It's a weirdly funny and bouncy 1955 B-movie. The script, by Edward Dein (who directed) and Mildred Dein, embroils the denizens of a Southern California beachside diner in nuclear espionage. But this jovial film noir's scruffy, oddball charm comes from what happens between face-offs and showdowns. Each customer is a regular who enters Keenan Wynn's greasy spoon with a big hello, then proceeds to antagonize the help, grouse about work, or spout deep-fried Freud.

The male bonding between Wynn and Lee Marvin (as Wynn's cook, nicknamed Slob) is pure straight-faced camp; at one point, they ask the curvaceous waitress, Terry Moore, to decide which of the two men has better legs. Their weight-lifting scene is almost as much of a gas as Moore's make-out session with atomic scientist Frank Lovejoy—she and Lovejoy kiss between civil-service-exam questions. The film boasts vintage fifties slang (Moore is called "the tomato"), Marvin's peerless gutter cheekiness, and an off-type appearance by the usually nondescript Whit Bissell as Wynn's traumatized war buddy. Dein and cinematographer Floyd Crosby ("Tabu") keep this joint jumping. To borrow from "Cheers" again, you're "always glad you came"—unless you're a double-crossing Communist spy.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Alien³—The latest and perhaps the last of the science-fiction horror series that began with "Alien" in 1979. Here, the heroine of the previous films, Ripley (Sigourney Weaver), crash-lands on a godforsaken planet whose population consists of a couple of dozen mean-looking convicts running some sort of dilapidated foundry. She has, unwittingly, brought one of those nasty, dripping, sharp-toothed aliens with her in the spacecraft. The script (by David Giler, Walter Hill, and Larry Ferguson) is designed to keep us asking ourselves the fundamental questions: Who will get eaten by the alien? In what order? Is the next one going to be too grisly to watch? Unfortunately, the director, David Fincher, doesn't seem to have the skill to make even the simplest action sequence coherent, or the patience to give the audience the narrative information it needs. Although he's a gifted imagemaker, the images never quite add up. Our interest expires long before the alien has hissed its last. Also with Charles S. Dutton, Charles Dance, and Lance Henriksen. Cinematography by Alex Thomson.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/1/92.) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.... ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex. Evenings only.... ¶ Bay Cinema; through June 30.)

Batman Returns—Tim Burton's sequel to his phenomenally successful 1989 "Batman" doesn't try to top the first picture, either with splashier special effects or with loftier pretensions to significance; nor does it simply go through the motions, repeating the surefire stuff with a self-satisfied air of professionalism. It's a blend of playful novelty and reassuring familiarity—a difficult mixture to get right. This time, the hero (again Michael Keaton) does battle with a greedy businessman named Max Shreck (Christopher Walken) and the roly-poly arch-criminal known as the Penguin (Danny DeVito). And whenever Batman ventures out on one of his nocturnal crime-fighting missions, he runs into a mysterious woman who dresses like a cat and carries a whip. The hilariously twisted relationship between the hero and the Catwoman (Michelle Pfeiffer) plays like an apache dance in animal costumes, and it's the glory of the movie. The cat clothes seem to release something strange and wild in Pfeiffer: her performance is ferociously sexy and uninhibitedly, over-the-top funny. As in the first movie, Burton gives the material a luxurious masked-ball quality and a sly contemporary wit without violating the myth's low, cheesy comic-book origins. He's an artist who's comfortable with both the higher aspirations and the lower instincts of his nature as an entertainer: he and Batman are an ideal match. Also with Michael Gough, Michael Murphy, Pat Hingle, and, in a cameo, Paul Reubens (better known as Pee-wee Herman). Screenplay by Daniel Waters; cinematography by Stefan Czapsky; score by Danny Elfman; production design by Bo Welch.—T.R. (6/29/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Loews Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Bizarre, Bizarre (1937)—Dadaist frivolity, with sequences that one giggles over happily for years. Jacques Prévert wrote and Marcel Carné directed this romantic, satirical comedy about the English mania for detective fiction, set in Edwardian England. Jean-Louis Barrault is the detective-story reader who decides to commit his own perfect crime by murdering the author (Michel Simon). With Françoise Rosay as Barrault's inamorata (he gathers a bouquet for her by stealing the boutonnieres of men who have been clobbered in the Limehouse alleys); Louis Jouvet as a clergyman; and Jean-Pierre Aumont as a lovesick milkman. A memorable deadpan dinner conversation about duck l'orange is the source of the American title. In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 5.)

Class Act—The latest teen comedy to star rapper/actors Kid 'N Play is like their two "House Party" films jumbled together and retooled in a high-school shop class. Kid changes his cloud-scraping haircut for mini-dreadlocks; otherwise, the movie doesn't offer much in the way of novelty or kicks. Kid is Duncan Pinderhughes, a wonk who doffs button-down collars when a school administrator accidentally switches his identity with that of Blade Brown (Play), a stylish, incorrigible homeboy. This could have been the nub of a real farce. In high school, intelligence is often in the mind of the beholder; students who are labelled "smart" can get special treatment. But the director, Randall Miller, and a cadre of screenwriters (John Semper and Cynthia Friedlob did the script, from a story by Michael Swerdlick, Wayne Rice, and Richard Brenne) come up with little more than brutal slapstick and up-to-the-minute slang. They target vacationing adolescents—there's an anti-drug rap number, a chase through a waxworks, and a fetching girlfriend for each hero. The anti-gay humor is particularly primitive; it reminds you that homophobia refers primarily to fear, not hatred.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street

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East 6, Loews Orpheum VII, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Olympia. Evenings only. . . . ¶ Manhattan Twin; through June 30.)

Cousin Bobby—Jonathan Demme's film about his cousin Robert Castle, an Episcopal pastor who works in Harlem, has a loose, friendly home-movie quality that's weird but appealing. Bobby is a chunky, balding, sixtyish priest who leads his poor parishioners on protest marches, delivers fiery speeches on the evils of racism, and generally stirs things up on behalf of the disadvantaged, the neglected, and the oppressed. Demme's offhand approach draws us into an unusual kind of intimacy with Bobby and the ravaged urban world he lives in. The movie is a brilliantly original portrait of a complex personality: it does justice to both the continuities and the discontinuities of its subject's life story. Demme, who is onscreen a fair amount, acts as a genial, low-pressure host; his manner is an invitation to the audience to join in the family feeling that's growing between him and his cousin. The film ends up being a lovely, amiably persuasive demonstration of the personal sources of political conviction.—T.R. (6/1/92) (Little Theatre.)

Far and Away—Despite all the publicity about the film's physical grandeur and the Gaelic heritage of the director, Ron Howard, this historical fantasy, set in the early eighteen-nineties, centers on the spectacle of the real-life spouses Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise enacting a coltish courtship. She's headstrong Shannon Christie, the only child of a wealthy Irish landowner (Robert Prosky) and a suffocatingly proper mother (Barbara Babcock). He's rebellious Joseph Donelly, a tenant farmer's son who botches an attempt to kill Shannon's father. You may be willing to accept the broad farce and melodrama for the sake of the scenery, shot in an imposing new Panavision Super 70 process. But Cruise and Kidman are a couple of kids playing "Let's pretend." When they reach the United States, you keep waiting for them to light out for the territories. They're stranded in Boston, where she plucks chickens, he becomes a bare-knuckled boxer, and Howard exposes the backside of the American Dream and of America's favorite young star. The director stages the climactic Oklahoma land rush with aplomb, but by then the audience has ceased to care.—M.S. (6/1/92) (Baronet, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas, Loews Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, and Ziegfeld; through June 30. . . . ¶ Worldwide Cinemas; starting July 1.)

Hear My Song—In this small-scale comedy, Peter Chelsom, a first-time director, takes a whimsical conceit and sells it so hard that it loses most of its fragile charm. Micky O'Neill (played by Adrian Dunbar, who co-wrote the screenplay with Chelsom) manages a Liverpool music hall that caters to the local Irish community; the movie is about his attempt to find a legendary Irish tenor named Josef Locke, who hasn't been heard from in thirty years. Micky goes to Ireland to persuade Locke to return to England for a concert; on the home soil, the hero finds himself in a realm of ancient eccentricity and unearthly light, and the movie finds itself in Bill Forsyth territory. Chelsom tries, too strenuously, to evoke the enchanted comic tone of "Local Hero," and Dunbar seems to punctuate every gag with a roguish smile. The relentless quirkiness is annoying, but the story is, on its own terms, well constructed, and the filmmakers take their fey, sentimental humor right to the limit: you can't say that they don't have the courage of their elfinness. And when Ned Beatty, who plays Locke, is on the screen the picture is nearly as transporting as it's intended to be. His performance is large-spirited comic acting: a pure specimen of Celtic soulfulness, the magical substance that everyone else in the movie has been trying to produce synthetically. Also with Shirley Anne Field.—T.R. (3/9/92) (Angelika Film Center, and Art East Cinema.)

Housesitter—A smug, lame comedy, directed by Frank Oz from a script by Mark Stein (and a story by Stein and the producer, Brian Grazer). Goldie Hawn plays a free spirit named Gwen, who takes charge of a floundering Boston architect named Newton Davis (Steve Martin). Gwen is an accomplished liar, and Hawn spins her biggest whoppers with sweeping confidence. Hawn keeps the audience on Gwen's side even when she commandeers a dream house that Newton intended for his childhood sweetheart, Becky (Dana Delany), and poses as Newton's wife. Gwen has genuine screwball potential—too bad it goes totally unrealized. She falls hard for Newton's idyllic home town, Dobbs Mill, in all its Colonial glory. This movie isn't anarchically egalitarian, like the great screwball comedies; it's upwardly mobile. Martin hasn't lost his timing or slapstick grace, but his inspiration is at low ebb. Peter MacNicol fashions his own pocket of furtive craziness, and Christopher Durang contributes a bright, subversive cameo. But the rest of the film is reflexively conventional. It's no more than a little white lie—very little and very white.—M.S. (6/29/92) (34th St. East, Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema.)

Howards End—James Ivory's movie version of the 1910 E. M. Forster novel is a handsome and intelligent piece of work: a faithful, well-paced, and carefully crafted dramatization of a very good story. The heroine, Margaret Schlegel (Emma Thompson), is a thirtyish Englishwoman of German ancestry who lives with her sister and her brother in a London town house. The plot brings the cultured and rather high-minded Schlegels in contact with a very different sort of family, the Wilcoxes, who appear to represent English values at their most infuriatingly solid and complacent. The emotional core of the movie is the brief, unlikely friendship that develops between Margaret and conservative Ruth Wilcox (Vanessa Redgrave), a woman who inhabits a narrow world so profoundly, and with such enormous feeling, that she transforms it. Redgrave is at her most radiant in this role. And Thompson, whose character is meant to be seen as the heir to Mrs. Wilcox's thoroughly English kind of spirituality, comes through with a thrilling, original performance; she carries the movie. These luminous performances go a long way toward putting Forster's ambitious ideas across on the screen. (Anthony Hopkins, as the no-nonsense businessman Henry Wilcox, is awfully good, too.) The story holds us for the full two hours and twenty minutes that the movie takes to tell it; Ivory and his screenwriter, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, have done a skillful and sensitive job of adaptation. All that's missing, really, is the elusive quality that makes Forster such a brave, moving writer: his constant striving to see beyond the story, to see through it, to transcend it. Also with Helena Bonham Carter, Samuel West, James Wilby, Nicola Duffett, Prunella Scales, and Adrian Ross Magenty.—T.R. (5/4/92) (Loews Fine Arts.)

Judge Priest (1934)—Some Irvin S. Cobb stories, brought to the screen by John Ford. Viewed now, this piece of Americana about a trial in a Kentucky town in 1890 is also a slice of old Hollywood: the cast includes Will Rogers, Anita Louise, Rochelle Hudson, Hattie McDaniel, and that much maligned comedian, Stepin Fetchit.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; July 2.)

Kiss of Death (1947)—A tense, terrifying New York crime melodrama, with an unusually authentic seamy atmosphere; the director, Henry Hathaway, brought his crew in from Hollywood and shot the entire film on location, in such places as a Harlem night-club, a house in Queens, the Criminal Courts Building, the Tombs, Sing Sing. Victor Mature gives an unexpectedly subdued, convincing performance as a hoodlum convict who, for the sake of his children (their mother has committed suicide), agrees to work with the police as an informer. Richard Widmark, in his film début, created a sensation; he's a giggling, sadistic gunman with homicidal mania in his voice, and when he grins his white teeth are more alarming than fangs. Ben Hecht and Charles Lederer wrote the script, from a story by Eleazar Lipsky. With the talented, refreshingly unactressy Coleen Gray as the hero's new wife, and Brian Donlevy, Taylor Holmes, Karl Malden, Anthony Ross, Mildred Dunnock, Millard Mitchell, Robert Keith, and Harry Bellaver. Cinematography by Norbert Brodine; in the night-club sequence, it's Jo Jones on drums. (Remade in 1958 as "The Fiend Who Walked the West.")—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting July 8.)

Michel Simon in "Bizarre, Bizarre"

Lethal Weapon 3—When that manic L.A.P.D. detective Martin Riggs (Mel Gibson) visits the home of rough-and-ready L.A.D. cop Lorna Cole (Rene Russo), he notices that her personal computer contains Three Stooges software. Moe, Larry, and Curly, who showed up in a film clip in "LW2," have become the guiding spirits of the series. The director, Richard Donner, and the screenwriters, Jeffrey Boam and Robert Mark Kamen, are too proud of their hit formula. They keep restating it: Cole describes the career of Riggs and his staid partner, Roger Murtaugh (Danny Glover), as a combination of "*The Police Gazette* and *Mad* magazine." Topically enough, the villain is a sadistic, corrupt ex-cop (played by Stuart Wilson). But all Donner and company deliver is their usual quasi-comic "chaos and mayhem." Joe Pesci surfaces again as Valley-speaking fixer Leo Getz, presumably to prove that the more stooges the merrier. But the central gag goes unstated. Riggs and Murtaugh are supposed to be effective. The "Lethal Weapon" movies put Keystone Kops on the Thin Blue Line and ask us to cheer them toward victory.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews New York Twin, Loews Orpheum VII, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Monster in a Box—Spalding Gray's latest filmed monologue details his effort to complete an autobiographical first novel, a nineteen-hundred-page monster about a man whose mother commits suicide while he's on vacation. Gray saves most of the family drama for the book. (In fact, it's just been published under the title "Impossible Vacation," at a mere two hundred and twenty-eight pages.) The performance piece simply chronicles what he did when he experienced non-writer's block. The comedic high point is his trip to an American-film festival in the Soviet Union; the low point is a panic over AIDS. It's an unearned "8½." Gray's manner of recitation is too broad and insistent here, and much of the material is warmed over. Directed by Nick Broomfield.—M.S. (6/29/92) (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Narrow Margin (1952)—Richard Fleischer directed this ingenious little "sleeper" set on a train. It's about a gangster's widow (Marie Windsor—she was the destructive floozie in "The Killing") on her reluctant way from Chicago to Los Angeles to testify before a grand jury. The gimmick is that she's being stalked by two mobsters, but they don't know what she looks like. This isn't a first-rate thriller; it's rather drab. Yet the train ride and that gimmick help to provide suspense, and a lot of people remember the movie fondly. (It was made for $188,000.) With Charles McGraw and Queenie Leonard. The screenplay is by Earl Felton.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; July 3-7.)

Night and the City (1950)—Several years before he made "Rififi," Jules Dassin directed this less flamboyant, thriller, which is much less well known, but, in some ways, better. Dassin's shocking specialty—a kind of stifled violence that one fears will explode—finds the right milieu in the Gerald Kersh novel, a complex view of the underside of London entertainment. An Anglo-American cast is headed by Richard Widmark, who has possibly his best role as Harry Fabian, "the artist without an art," a tout with a creative passion for fantastic, shady schemes. The

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At Lincoln Plaza,
Anna Galiena in "The Hairdresser's Husband"

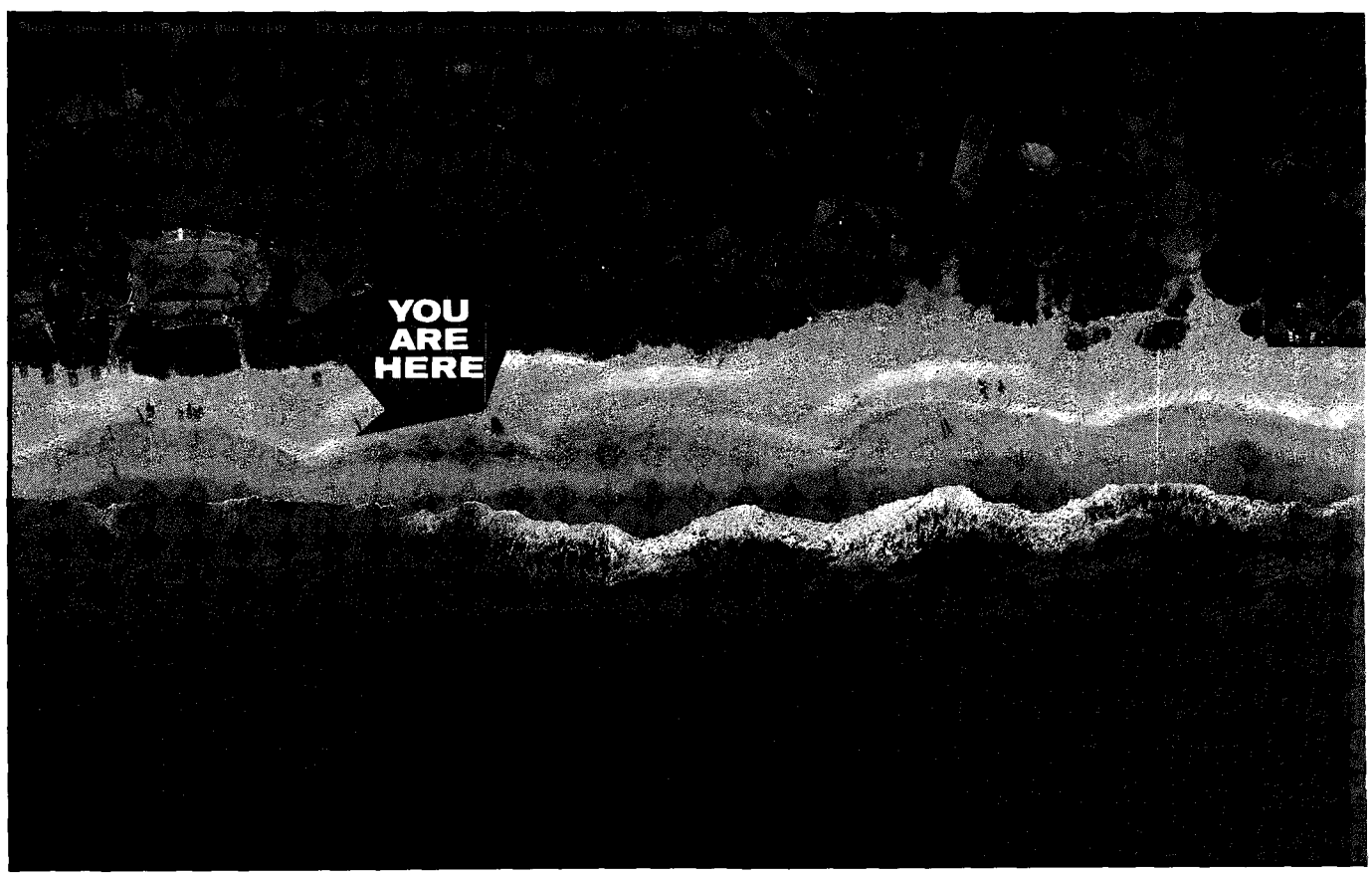
victims of his double-crossing artistry include Googie Withers, Francis L. Sullivan, Gene Tierney, Herbert Lom, and—as the old-time wrestler pitted against Mike Mazurki—Stanislaus Zbyszko. With Hugh Marlowe. Script by Jo Eisinger; cinematography by Max Greene.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting July 8.)

Night on Earth—This anthology film, written and directed by Jim Jarmusch ("Stranger Than Paradise"), has a gimmicky premise. Each of its five stories takes place in a different city, and each is about a taxicab ride. All the trips are going on at the same time, but in different time zones, so there's an illusion of temporal progress: the picture begins at sunset in Los Angeles and ends at dawn in Helsinki. (The intervening episodes take place in New York, Paris, and Rome.) It's a feeble but serviceable conceit; if the sketches were funny, we'd barely notice the preciousness of the structure. Unfortunately, the material is very thin, and the movie doesn't vary its style from sketch to sketch: Jarmusch sticks doggedly to his trademark deadpan manner. The comedian Roberto Benigni, playing a motor-mouth cabbie in the Italian episode, briefly enlivens the picture with a riotous erotic monologue. But, for the most part, the movie induces in the viewer an eerie, suspended feeling that mimics the time-stands-still monotony of a long airplane journey. It tries for a chipper, lighthearted tone, but it gives the audience a gruelling flight—a red-eye to nowhere. Also with Winona Ryder, Gena Rowlands, Giancarlo Esposito, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Rosie Perez, Isaach de Bankolé, Béatrice Dalle, and Matti Pellonpää. In English, French, Italian, and Finnish.—T.R. (5/18/92) (Angelika Film Center. . . . ¶ 62nd & Broadway; through June 30. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall Cinema; starting July 1.)

Patriot Games—Phillip Noyce's film, adapted from one of Tom Clancy's jillion-selling suspense novels, is a much more effective thriller than it has any right to be. The screenwriters, W. Peter Iliff and Donald Stewart, have eliminated much of the novel's hot air without entirely knocking the wind out of the material; the script tones down Clancy's right-wing ideology and gives the story some straightforward action-movie narrative drive. The plot, which pits Irish terrorists against an Annapolis history professor and sometime C.I.A. analyst named Jack Ryan (Harrison Ford), is ridiculous, boys'-adventure stuff, but the filmmakers almost put it across. Noyce handles the action sequences beautifully: they're lucid and exciting, and their construction has a kind of formal elegance that's oddly satisfying. (He's less successful with the scenes of the Ryan family's domestic bliss, which are meant to establish Jack's credentials as a champion of traditional values.) Ford brings a welcome trace of ambivalence to his character's heroics—a sense that Ryan isn't altogether proud of the lethal efficiency he displays when's he's drawn into combat. Sean Bean, Richard Harris, and (especially) James Fox do nice work in supporting roles. This is an expert, entertaining genre picture. Noyce and his team serve Clancy's crude material well—too well, probably. Also with Anne Archer (who's awful), Thora Birch, James Earl Jones, Samuel L. Jackson, and Patrick Bergin. Cinematography by Donald McAlpine.—T.R. (6/15/92) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U. A. East, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Pinocchio (1940)—Disney's best feature cartoon—an elating, sometimes terrifying musical adventure. A good fairy grants wood-carver Geppetto's wish that his puppet Pinocchio were his real son—on condition that the marionette first learn right from wrong. (His nose sprouts like Jack's beanstalk when he tells a lie.) Jiminy Cricket made his infectiously funny début as Pinocchio's conscience. Disney's humane take on Carlo Collodi's imaginative but flinty book is inspiring for children and primally nostalgic for adults. The animation is as fecund and economical as great silent slapstick; the most ingenious bits of business pop like cap pistols. You come out savoring the visual beauty and invention, the narrative zing, and the catchy tunes (by Leigh Harline and Ned Washington), which include "Hi Diddle Dee Dee (An Actor's Life for Me)," "I've Got No Strings," and "When You Wish Upon a Star." Ben Sharpsteen and Hamilton Luske were the supervising directors; seven writers did the adaptation. With the voices of Dickie Jones (Pinocchio), Christian Rub (Geppetto), and Cliff Edwards (Jiminy Cricket).—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, and Guild. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex, and Olympia. Matinées only.)

The Playboys—This absorbing, uneven romantic comedy-drama, set in a small Irish town in 1957, takes its name from a travelling troupe. The heroine is an unwed mother named



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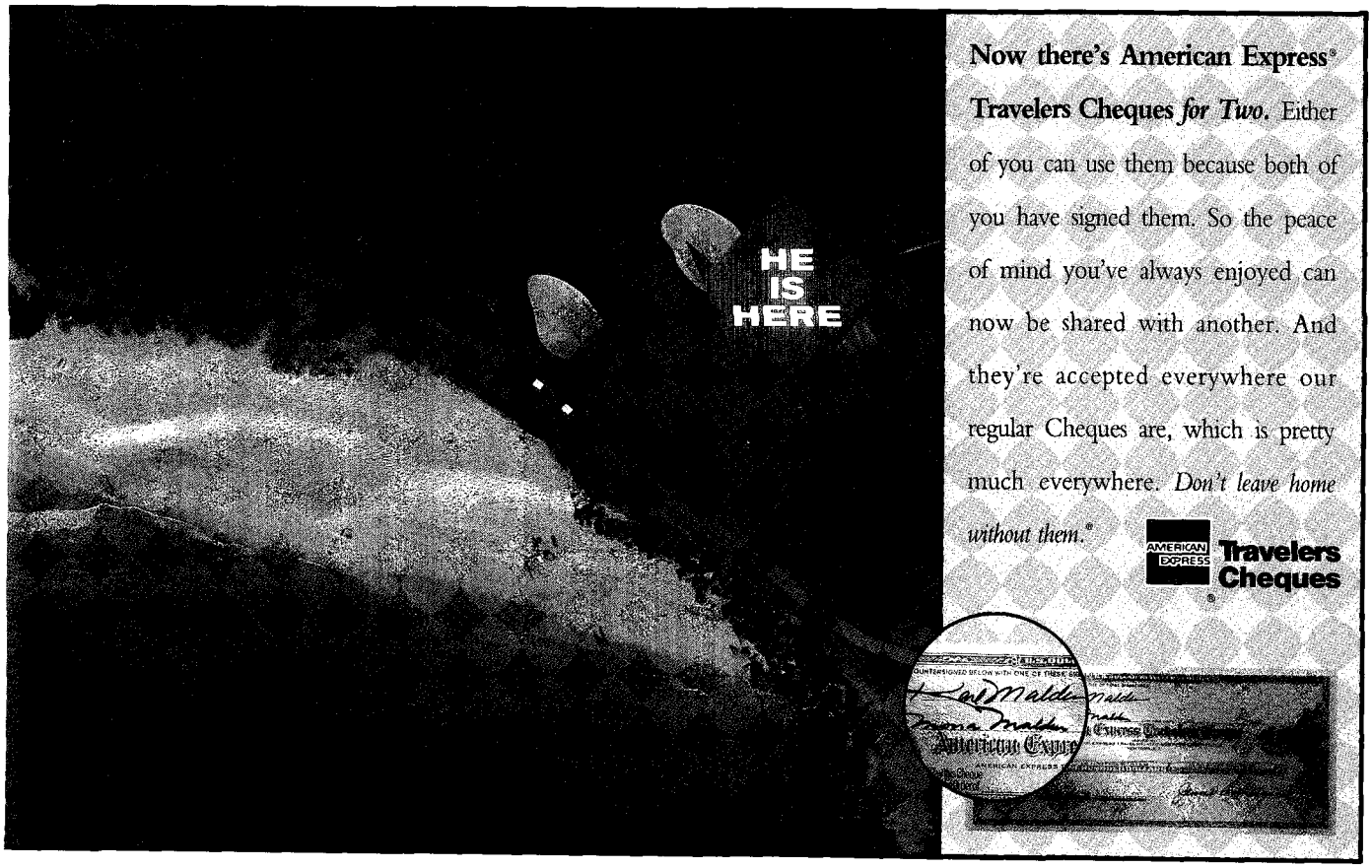
Tara (Robin Wright). She challenges every male authority figure in town and drives all the men wild—especially the violent, alcoholic constable, Sergeant Hegarty (Albert Finney), who seethes when he sees her with her actor lover Tom (Aidan Quinn). The screenwriters, Shane Connaughton (who co-wrote "My Left Foot") and Kerry Crabbe, are full of ideas and observations about orthodox religion, claustrophobic village mores, the craziness of life in a divided country, and the last gasp of strolling players before TV's ascendancy. Wright and Quinn are well matched, and the director, Gillies MacKinnon, and his cinematographer, Jack Conroy, provide images that sparkle with amorous possibilities. But the filmmakers don't funnel their panoply of themes gracefully into Tara's story. Her affair with Tom comes off as a foil to Finney's passionate portrait of stewed wrath and despair. He endows a clenched, masochistic character with such scale and force that he takes over the movie.—M.S. (5/18/92) (Gramercy, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

The Player—The title character of Robert Altman's new movie is a young Hollywood studio executive named Griffin Mill (Tim Robbins), who, for no very good reason, murders an aspiring screenwriter. The picture is a brilliant dark comedy about the death of American filmmaking. It's like a documentary about a mirage: the world it shows us is sunlit and shimmering, and the people have the thin presence of holograms. Altman is doing one of his specialties here—exploring an odd American subculture—and when his idiosyncratic realism is applied to the insular, constantly self-regarding community of Hollywood "players" it has an almost hallucinatory effect. The movie has the exhilarating nonchalance of the director's seventies classics, and its tone is volatile, elusive: with breathtaking assurance, it veers from psychological-thriller suspense to goofball comedy to icy satire. Altman turns the self-reflective world of Hollywood into a fun house in which every grotesque distortion somehow appears to us as a newly discovered, paradoxical truth. Robbins gives a layered, richly suggestive performance—the sort of performance that Altman's style, at its best, produces without obvious effort. At sixty-seven, Altman still seems like the youngest filmmaker in America. Also with Greta Scacchi, Peter Gallagher, Fred Ward, Whoopi Goldberg, Cynthia Stevenson, Vincent D'Onofrio, Lyle Lovett, Dean Stockwell, and Richard E. Grant; dozens of movie stars (and a handful of writers) turn up in cameos. The script, by Michael Tolkin, is adapted from his own novel.—T.R. (4/20/92) (Beekman, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through June 30.)

Sister Act—Whoopi Goldberg stars as a Reno lounge singer on the lam from her murderous mobster ex-lover (Harvey Keitel). Disguised as a nun in a San Francisco convent, she manages to bring new music into the choir, fresh street faces into the pews, and a social-activist spirit into the revitalized congregation. The plot and the characters are almost insultingly perfunctory (the pseudonymous Joseph Howard is credited with the script), and when there isn't any rock on the soundtrack the moviemaking is listless. Still, the director, Emile Ardolino, who made "Dirty Dancing," knows how to use sixties hits for an over-all bounce that jumps audiences past dead patches. Goldberg maintains her gruff tone, which helps keep the film from stagnating with sappiness. If Maggie Smith glowers ineffectually as the Mother Superior, a couple of actresses—Kathy Najimy and Mary Wickes—imbue their nun roles with the euphoria of inspired farceurs. (Najimy defines "overjoyed.") The film isn't a divine comedy, and it's not satisfyingly profane either. But it generates a few laughs. It's got a good beat, and you can dance to it.—M.S. (6/15/92) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1.)

The Waterdance—This semi-autobiographical movie about paraplegics carries its weight of authority lightly. The writer and co-director, Neal Jimenez, whose credits include the screenplay for "River's Edge," became wheelchair-bound after a hiking accident, like his central figure here, a novelist named Joel Garcia (Eric Stoltz). Jimenez and his directing partner, Michael Steinberg, approach each problem head on, from racial tension in the hospital ward to Joel's sexual anguish, while trying to leave the incidents lifelike and ambiguous. There are no inspirational speeches, and every climax turns out to be anti-. But at best this film is a compendium of negative virtues. The men progress predictably toward railing at the universe. The movie's most original stroke is to center the action on a hyperconscious lead character. Unfortunately, Joel is the autobiographical hero as abashed apologist, laying out and criticizing his experiences without exposing his core. He's fuzzy and pallid compared to his compadres, the white racist biker Bloss (William Forsythe) and the black former ladies' man Ray Hill (Wesley Snipes). Forsythe's tender gnarliness and Snipes's electric lyricism are the reasons to see the movie. With Helen Hunt, Grace Zabriskie, and Elizabeth Peña.—M.S. (6/15/92) (First & 62nd Cinemas, and Quad Cinema.)

Wisecracks—The Canadian filmmaker Gail Singer explores the pressures on women comedians while showcasing performers ranging from Phyllis Diller, Whoopi Goldberg, and the talk-show host Jenny Jones (in her standup days) to a trio of madly inventive lip-synchers known as the Clichettes. In interviews and clips, Singer's subjects manage to be witty about everything from P.M.S. to prolifers, including the hostility these standups sometimes face from audiences and promoters alike. Singer doesn't pose any topic that comics like Maxine Lapiduss, Ellen DeGeneres, Sandra Shamas, Joy Behar, and Lotus Weinstock can't riff on or parody. The director has a sure sense of balance: she knows that what sounds portentous in theory can be hilarious in practice. Her movie succeeds as investigation because it also succeeds as entertainment.—M.S. (6/1/92) (Film Forum.)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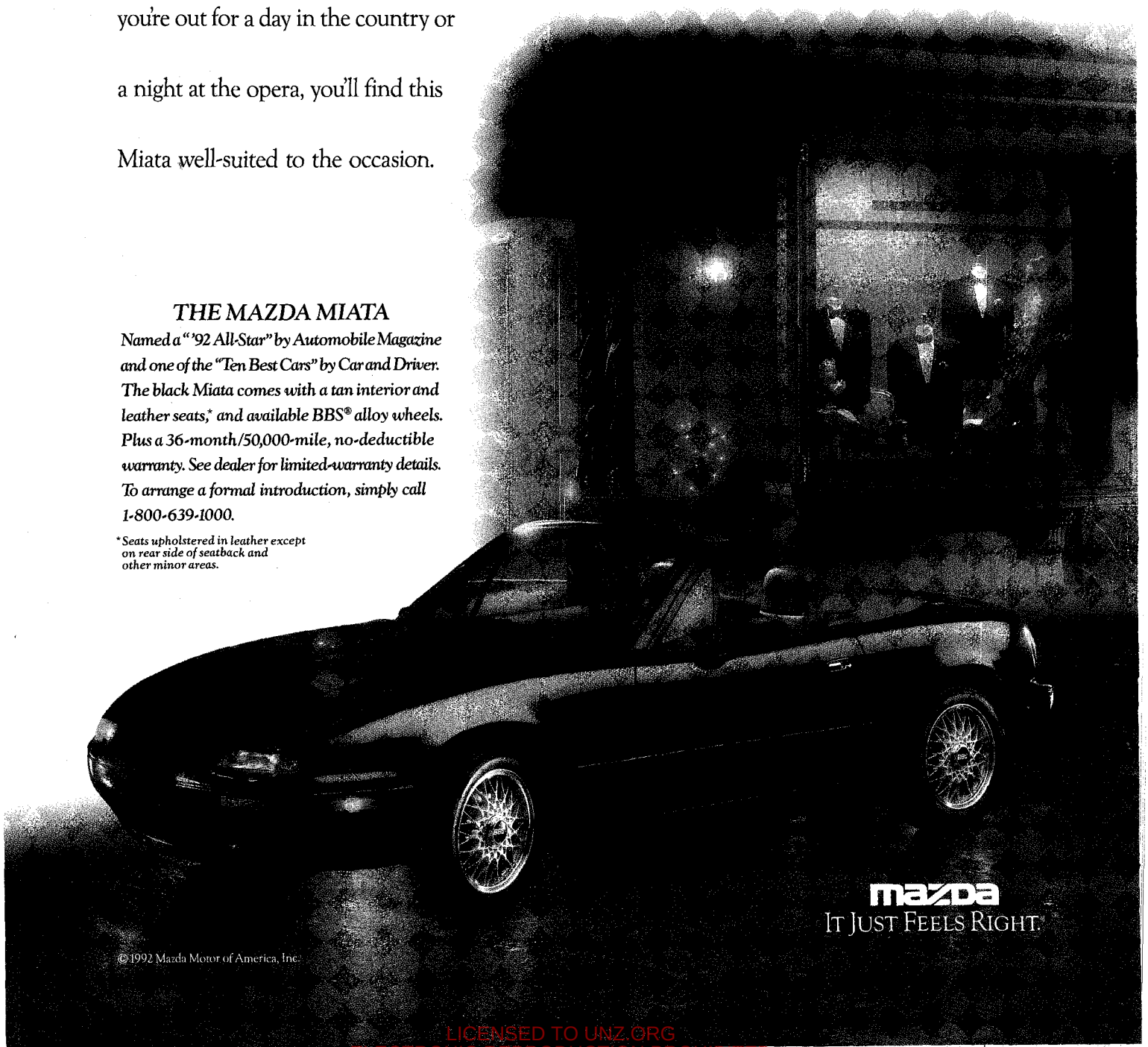

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THE NEW YORKER

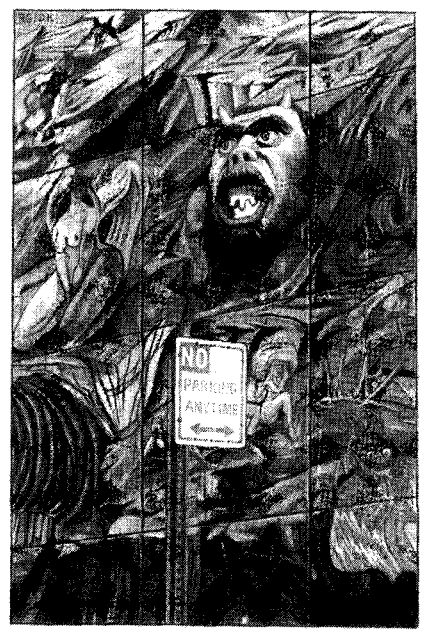
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

TRYING to stay on top of the news, we turn often to the *Maine Antique Digest*. We were leafing through the most recent issue the other day, looking at stories on the growth in the prices of nineteenth-century board games and also at a rather touching obit of William Gaines (the founder of *Mad* and, it turns out, a big player in the Statue of Liberty-memorabilia game), when a piece by a reporter named Dorothy Gelatt caught our eye. Ms. Gelatt, we were interested to discover, had been looking into a subject that had been nagging us for weeks; namely, all those tchotchkes in Ross Perot's office—where do they come from?

Ms. Gelatt is sort of the Seymour Hersh of the *Maine Antique Digest*, having over the years turned up one interesting story after another about art-market shenanigans. (In the current issue, for instance, she has another in her series of pieces about Alan Bond, the Australian who set an auction-price record when he bought van Gogh's "Irises" a few years ago for fifty million plus, but who, it turns out, didn't actually pay all that himself—he floated a loan from the auction house for half the price.) Using our own reportorial skills, we tracked down Ms. Gelatt—we had her figured for a lobster-pot-and-wood-stove existence up there in Maine, but it turns out that she lives on the Upper West Side—and asked her how she had come to be sniffing around Ross Perot's art objects.

"Well, *Maine Antique* had never done a political story," she replied. "And we will probably never do another. It all started for me with a chance observation by David Nash, of Sotheby's. I asked him if he thought the elections in the fall would have any effect on the art market. His wife, the art expert Lucy Mitchell-Innes, said that you never knew—that they had been surprised at how much Desert Storm affected the art market. And then David said, jokingly, 'Well, I don't see Ross Perot buying any art.' I mentioned that remark in passing to Sam Pennington, our editor, and he said that on television he had seen Perot surrounded in his office by a lot of patriotic art. I started watching him on TV, with all this stuff—fife-and-drum-corps paintings behind him, little chunks of Rockwell. So I wanted to find out if he really collected art in *Maine Antique*'s major field—Americana—and I went to work. I talked to a lot of people. It seemed that Perot did his first shopping for American art twenty years ago, at the Kennedy Galleries, here in town. He was interested in anything 'patriotic.' He bought all the basic Remington bronzes. And



what you often see in pictures of him is one of fourteen known copies by Archibald Willard of the painting we refer to as 'The Spirit of '76.' Apparently, he also bought a Mary Cassatt, but I don't yet know which one. He seemed to have good, virtuous, flag-waving American taste.

"But then things got a little strange. I got Perot's biography from his press office, and one of the things that it says is 'In 1984, Mr. Perot purchased the only copy of the Magna Carta that has been allowed to be taken out of Great Britain.' And then it explains that the copy is now in the National Archives, in Washington." Ms. Gelatt eventually found out that Perot had bought the Magna Carta from one of the relatives of Lord Cardigan, "the Light Brigade guy"; the price, he announced, was one and a half million dollars. "But what it is isn't really the original, 1215 Magna Carta at all," she told us. "It's what's called in Magna Carta circles an Inspecsimus—that is, a confirmation of a revised version of the Great Charter—and it was issued in 1297. This isn't nearly so big a deal; it's really a third-generation rewrite.

"And then I looked into how it had ended up in the National Archives. I can't get the National Archives to say much, but Perot didn't give it to the Archives—he just lent it. And they don't make it completely clear who owns it. The documentation at the Archives says 'Courtesy of the Men and Women of Electronic Data Systems.' What seems clear, though, is that Perot didn't exactly buy the Magna Carta, and what he did buy doesn't belong to the country."

Ms. Gelatt went on to say, "I found out that there's a similar story about the two Gilbert Stuart portraits of George

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and Martha Washington. The National Portrait Gallery hoped that Perot would buy these two historic portraits—the price was about six million dollars. But he said he wouldn't buy them for the Gallery—he would buy them for himself and then lend them to the Gallery. The Gallery told him that it couldn't agree to that, and then it went out and found some people who were willing to do something that would benefit the whole country. And something similar happened again, when the University of Texas wanted to buy an important collection of early printed books. Perot lent fifteen million to the university, but insisted that it be paid back, so they had to go around among their millionaires to try to pay back the billionaire. And then there was the time Perot tried to buy the Museum of the American Indian and move it from New York to Dallas. The whole project would have cost him seventy million dollars, but he demanded a hundred-per-cent tax deduction from the I.R.S. He would have got the credit for saving the museum, but at a cost to the American taxpayer of tens of millions of dollars. In the end, of course, the deal fell through."

Ms. Gelatt, like the real reporter she is, declined to say much about what she thought it all meant. But it occurred to us that there was something revealing in the whole story—something about what can lie behind the urge to make apparently selfless patriotic gestures that prove, on examination, to be fairly shrewd and self-serving acts, with a lot of strings attached. There's something a little unnerving about these gestures—it's as if Ross Perot wanted to *own* the symbols of democracy and share them with the rest of us only on his terms.

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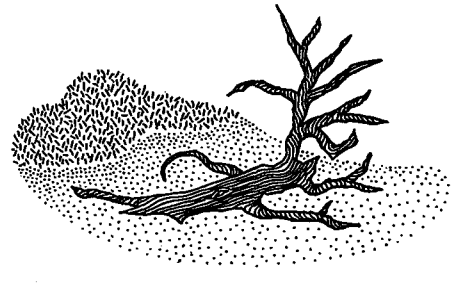
Sunset

AN Alaskan friend writes:

Having been away from Anchorage for a few years, and wanting to get a good view of the city once again, I climbed Flattop Mountain on the evening of the summer solstice. From the summit of this oddly truncated peak, on the eastern edge of town, you can look out over the wide expanse of Anchorage, which sits on a triangle of land between the Chugach Mountains and the two arms of Cook Inlet. That evening, as the sun was preparing to dip below the horizon for its four-hour parody of night, a hundred or so hikers made their way up the Flattop trail, which is about a mile and a half long, and which first crosses over the mossy tundra of the Chugach foothills and then winds upward through a thousand feet of gravel and scree and barren rock outcroppings to the summit. The hikers came in all varieties: an eight-year-old, an elderly couple, a golden retriever, a man in cowboy boots, a Native American, a Jesuit Volunteer Corps worker, and Toni and Grace—two Lycra-clad young women who hiked up the mountain with white plastic chairs strapped to their backs.

"I'd offer you a seat, but we only brought two," Grace said when we reached the top. She did offer Brie and crackers, and even some Johannesburg Riesling, which the two women had packed up along with the chairs. "Sunshine is precious up here," Grace said, explaining their elaborate preparations for the climb. "The solstice is a holiday, and not just something that comes and goes, the way it does in other places. Here you're struck by the extremes." She also said she had been expecting to find a band at the top, since during last year's celebration a string quartet had been flown in.

I pulled up a rock, spread some Brie on a cracker, and watched the reflections in the inlet as the sun slipped out from scattered clouds and into clear sky near the horizon. Beyond the city and the inlet, the horizon is studded with mountains: the volcanic Mts. Iliamna, Redoubt, and Spurr, on the northern fringe of the Aleutian Range, to the west; Mt. Susitna, low and broad, across the northwest; and, in the Alaska Range, Mt. Foraker and Mt. McKinley—the tallest mountain in North America—which dominate the northern horizon from a hundred and fifty miles off. Another climber, Tom, who had sidled up to the spread, told us he and Grace were of like mind about the solstice. "In Anchorage, we spend our years quivering back and forth between light and darkness," he said. "I've never lived in a place where I'm so conscious of the earth's tilt." Tom noted that there is also a hike in December, at the winter solstice, to mark the disappearance of the light.



"Not many people celebrate the winter solstice," Grace said. "They just let that one slide."

"Anchorage is beautiful in the distance when it begins to light up at night," Tom said. "When you get closer, you realize that every other light is a 7-Eleven. You have to understand, it's a shallow culture. Anchorage is as old as Boston was in 1708. Fifty per cent of the people here weren't here ten years ago. A third of the people here now don't know if they will be here next year. There's not a strong sense of community. People don't plan to stay, so the attitude is: Go ahead, put the mini-mall on the corner."

Toni took exception to what Tom said. Her parents are longtime Alaskans, and she grew up here. She thinks that the fact that most Alaskans are in the state by choice makes for a stronger community—that people who come to the state are likely to have similar interests and values. "I mean, you don't end up in Alaska just by accident," she said.

Tom, who had come to Alaska after being laid off by the Washington *Post*, felt that, generally speaking, desperation plays a bigger part than values in the decision to come north. "There are a lot of people up here trying to escape things—child support, wives, the law," he said. "There's a lot of violent crime. And then there's this weird dream of living on the frontier. People move to the towns outside Anchorage and end up being nothing but commuters." More than anything else, he added, people have come to Alaska for economic opportunity, but lately, with the decline of oil prices and the gradual decrease in oil production, this has been in short supply.

A few minutes before midnight, the Anchorage bowl was filled with lights, and the sun finally sank below the horizon, just south of Mt. McKinley. (The mountain stayed silhouetted through the rest of the brief night.) By this time, the group of young men

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around Grace and Toni had grown to embarrassing proportions, so Tom and I walked off to admire Ptarmigan Peak, to the east. "Everything that man has made here is ugly," Tom said. "Nature is beautiful here, but the landscape is not like New England, where you see old farmhouses and stone fences that are part of the environment and humanize it. Here even the wilderness is alienating; it lacks the human element." We walked over to the other side of the mountain, where Tom had set up his tent, and checked his thermometer. It was forty-seven degrees.

Soon the wind picked up, and clouds began to sweep down out of the passes between the peaks to the east. The temperature dropped, and people were huddling together on the rocks, trying to use one another as wind blocks. Someone had brought along a deck of tarot cards, and, with these and some bad jokes, we amused ourselves for a couple of hours longer. A young woman from Seattle drew the first card, which symbolized indecision, and that, she claimed, "was just perfect." A second player drew the card of loss, which sat with him less well. Around two-thirty, most people crept off to their tents in the grayness.

At six, I got up and saw rain clouds drizzling on the mountains just to the east of us. Within minutes, I had packed and was running down the rocks to beat the rain. I tried to keep in mind that a young man had died on this mountain just a few weeks before, and as I made my way down the trail I also thought about a story that Chris Tomsen, the secretary of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, which more or less sponsors the solstice climb, had told us during the evening. "In December, at the winter solstice, the weather came in real heavy," he said. "Most folks didn't even make it out of town. After half an hour out in the whiteout, we decided to turn around. It was ten degrees, and the wind had been gusting at thirty-five or forty miles an hour. I went back down the trail and dug a snow cave. But around midnight the wind died down a bit, so I started up the trail, and I made it to the upper saddle. By then, the storm had dumped about eight inches of new snow there. So I went back and spent the night in the snow cave."

Things could be worse, I thought, even though the drizzle had by now obscured just about every mountain to the west except Mt. Susitna, which is also known as the Sleeping Lady. A few hours earlier, a young woman named Nancy, who moved to Anchorage from South Dakota a couple of years ago, had told the local legend of the Sleeping Lady. She was a beautiful Indian woman whose lover had gone off to war and left her waiting by the sea. In her devotion, she lay down there to sleep, and, so the story goes, will rise again only when peace comes and her lover is able to return. There was disagreement about some of the details of the story, and particularly about whether her lover had been killed in the war. "Don't you see, I think that's just the point," Nancy said. "No one knows whether or not he'll ever come back."

Escalation

Meryl Wheeler, whose job it is to publicize the New Music Seminar, describes it as "an unconventional convention." Ice-T, the rapper and movie star and magnet for controversy, calls it a place where "a lot of people are gonna fuck to get a record deal, and a lot of people are gonna get a record deal and get fucked." Suffice it to say that the New Music Seminar, which was held last month, at the Marriott Marquis, for the thirteenth time, is supposed to be one big opportunity for people who are in the music business, or just look that way, to get together and talk about Pavement, Unrest, Daisy Chainsaw, Paw, Cop Shoot Cop, Superchunk, 7 Year Bitch, and other developing acts for five days or so before they return to the real world, where the hot musical topics are how Billy Ray Cyrus's "Achy Breaky Heart" got to the top of the *Billboard* charts while Bruce Springsteen's albums can't even stay in the top thirty. During the day, there are panels with names like "Hip Hop in the Media: Getting a Bad Rap" and "College Radio: The Nature of the Beast"; every night, there are showcases in clubs all over town. For those five days in June, the New Music Seminar seems like the only

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place on earth where nostalgia is not the norm.

The first afternoon, we head over to the Marriott to register, and realize that we are likely to spend most of our time in the next few days riding up and down escalators and trying to figure out where we are. Unlike other conventions we've been to, which have been held in large auditoriums, with meetings in adjacent smaller rooms, the New Music Seminar takes place in several little rooms on several levels of the hotel. Like much of the music it is supposed to be about, the New Music Seminar lacks a center. After a while, we get used to the sight of people with pink hair, women with hairy legs in cut-off shorts, and men with dreadlocks or circa-1982 mohawks, all wearing "N.M.S." badges around their necks like dog tags and all looking lost.

The seminar officially begins the next morning, with keynote addresses, one of which is delivered by a Native American poet-musician named John Trudell. After first getting off the escalator on the wrong level, we arrive in the Grand Ballroom, in time to hear Trudell talk about "predator energy," and about how we live in a time of "the Industrial Reich and the Corporate Nazi." He explains that this Nazi sometimes calls himself a democrat and sometimes calls himself a Communist, but it's all pretty much the same. Just when we are starting to wonder what any of this has to do with music—new or old—Trudell explains that "the predator Nazi energy fears the music and the expressions of the people," and that the room we are sitting in right now is full of spies and F.B.I. agents and C.I.A. operatives, who are here to turn us in for our thought crimes. We look to our left and see a white guy in a Cat Butt T-shirt and with two days' beard, and we look to our right and see a short black girl wearing a backward baseball cap and a badge that reads "M.C. Petite." For a moment, we wonder if we haven't accidentally walked onto the set of an Oliver Stone movie.

After Trudell, Ice-T appears. Later this year, he and his main man, Ice Cube, will be starring in the movie "Looters"—provided that recent events in Los Angeles don't force them to change the title. But just this morning, *USA Today* has reported that in response to a police boycott in Texas the Super Club Music record chain has removed the album that Ice-T recorded recently with his band, Body Count—it's the album with the picture of a black gunman, and with a label that says "Cop Killer"—from all its three hundred stores. According to the moderator who introduces Ice-T, the prospect of the ban increased album sales in Texas three hundred per cent in the last week. "He's getting ready to go gold with that album, and if the police have anything to do with it, it'll go platinum," the moderator says. Police forces around the country, it turns out, are also planning to boycott the movie "Batman Returns," because it is distributed by Time Warner, which owns Body Count's record company. So Ice-T is very much in the news, and his speech is attended by many reporters and camera crews.

"Let's get down to the nitty-gritty while all these cameras are following me around," Ice says from the podium. "Even if it is basically for their ratings." He points out that trying to boycott the Body Count album is counterproductive. "Are you gonna shut my next record down?" he asks. "Because I'm gonna talk crazier. I'm gonna talk about *this* record on the *next* record." Ice goes on to say that his audience consists mostly of college kids, who are unlikely to start shooting the police, and he adds, "If you listen to my record, right after 'Cop Killer' there's a song called 'Momma's Gotta Die Tonight.' And nobody gives a fuck about Mom? Just the police? Fuck the police."

Ice says a few things about the New Music Seminar itself—about how it's a few days when people in the record industry act as if they cared, even though in reality MCA and Sony are just relieved that, for the moment, they don't have Time Warner's problems.

On Friday afternoon, we attend a forum in the North Ballroom called "Pot in Pop: Let's Be Blunt." The de-facto moderator is Steve Bloom, who is an editor of *High Times*, the house organ of the marijuana culture. Among the panel members is B-Real, of Cypress Hill—a rap group so strongly in favor of marijuana smoking that its logo is a big picture of the

"I'm running a loose ship."

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leafy weed. "More people get high than listen to Michael Jackson," B-Real says at the outset. Also on the panel is Becky Wreck, the drummer of the all-girl band Lunachicks. She admits that she started smoking pot before she knew that hemp was good for the environment. "But now that I know, I'm gonna smoke even more," she assures everyone. Dave Wyndorf, of the band Monster Magnet, proclaims himself to be "suburban white trash," and says that if he'd never smoked pot he'd be working in a gas station. Rounding out the panel is Rude Boy, the lead singer of the funk-metal band Urban Dance Squad, who lives in Amsterdam. He claims that he smoked his first joint ever with the other panelists in the ready room just before coming out for the forum. He seems pleased with the experience. "I'm no smoker whatsoever," he says, speaking with a Dutch accent, and immediately forgets his next thought. Then he says, "I know that the Ultra Magnetic MCs get most of their ideas from taking mescaline, so maybe I will try that next." This remark earns great applause from the audience, whose members are passing around several joints.

"This is a psychologist's nightmare," a woman sitting next to us says, but that does not stop her from taking two big hits when a joint comes her way.

B-Real offers pot-smoking tips for beginners ("Smoke bongs rather than paper"), and Steve Bloom comes up with some tidbits from the history of hemp: that the first draft of the Declaration of Independence was written on paper made from hemp; that all the uniforms and blankets used in the First World War were made of hemp; that Washington and Jefferson and all the Founding Fathers were hemp farmers; that hemp could replace gas, oil, coal, fossil fuel, and nuclear power, and all of Congress if only it were legal.

Then Steve Bloom talks about pot rallies, and about how fifty thousand people recently gathered for one in Atlanta, although their numbers might have had something to do with the fact that the Black Crowes played. B-Real breaks in to say, "The thing is that everyone goes to these pot rallies, and we all get high and we all have so much fun and get so into it that we forget the reason we're there, and everyone forgets to sign the petitions, and stuff. So the next time you go to a pot rally, remember to sign before you leave."

"That's the problem with pot," the woman next to us whispers. "It kind of kills your motivation."

Then someone steps up to the microphone and says that marijuana can be dangerous and addictive, and can lead to the harder stuff, like heroin and barbiturates, which can lead to overdoses. "I know of no instances of death leading to marijuana use," B-Real says in response, and this seems to settle the matter.

That night, we briefly consider attending a CBGB showcase of bands from Finland, with names like Poverty Stinks, but decide to skip it. We get a message on our answering machine that Sean Lennon will be making a surprise appearance with the Whole Earth Mamas at a club called Sweet Jane, but we decide that we're not interested in second-generation would-be rock stars. We get the feeling that we really should see Unrest or Paw or Pavement, since they're supposed to be rising stars, and we get the feeling that we *really* should go to the album-release party for Sonic Youth, since it's the oldest band around to still be making new music. But mostly we get the feeling that we should just go home and get some sleep.

"Actually, I was assigned to Heaven, but it would have meant spending eternity with my first wife."

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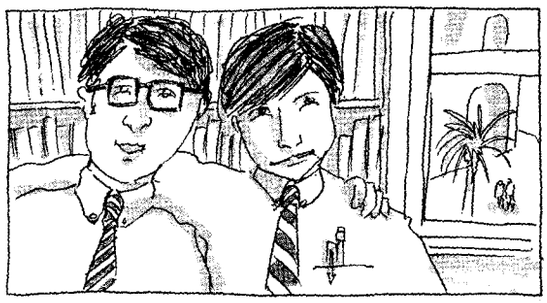
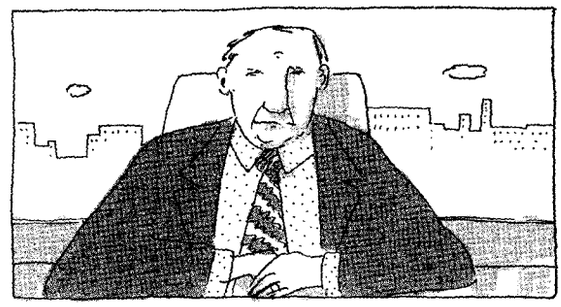
ALSO AVAILABLE



Josh LeGrand and Andy Fratello

Co-Treasurers, Student Council, Tangelo High School, Tangelo, Cal. Best friends since second grade. Combined G.P.A. (excluding Phys. Ed.): a perfect 4.0! Priorities include: No. 1, deficit reduction; No. 2, development of high-definition-television capability. Combined ages (33) just short of Constitutionally suggested 35, but close friend and chess-club pres. Jamal Greenberg (age 16; picture unavailable) willing to help out weekends.

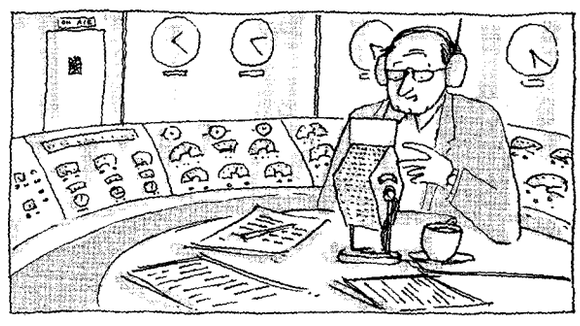


Harvey "Rust" Perrault

Former Car Wash King of South Baltimore. Started U-Buf-N-Sav chain in 1958 with $600 investment; sold business to Korean car-wash consortium in 1987 for $1.5 million. Since then, active "behind the scenes" in S. Baltimore politics. Owns and wears American-made shirts and slacks only. No specific policy proposals at this time, but would not offer Cabinet positions to unusually short persons, who might distract from work to be done.

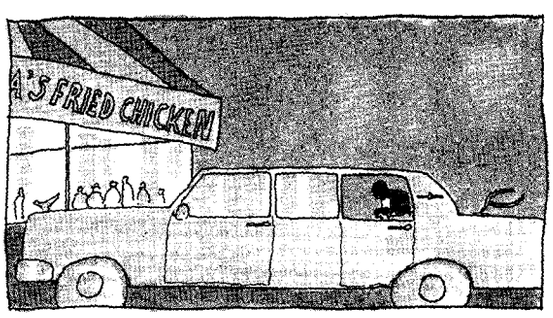
Bette Anne Frazee

Talk about family values! Mother of five (Bob Jr., Bill, Brad, Bud, and Barbara Alice Elizabeth). Four-time Chairperson, Hartpence (Ohio) PTA. Block Organizer, Do the Right Thing Litter Busters Weekend. Why doesn't government work? Three little letters: M-E-N. They just don't get it, do they? Favors Constitutional Amendments requiring balanced budget and national paternity-leave policy.



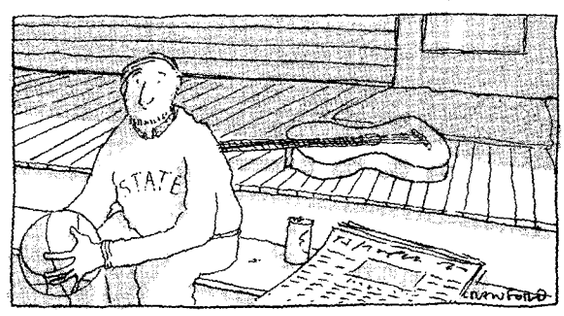
E. Archibald Harp

Columnist and radio call-in host, Beltsville (near Muncie), Indiana. Has written weekly "Harp's Carps" column in Beltsville *Trumpet & Advertiser* for 37 years. First predicted the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1958! Longtime opponent of the two-party system. 1991 candidacy for City Council defeated by smear campaign conducted by a coalition of local drug kingpins and special interests. An extensive list of policy positions is available (enclose $1 for handling).



Elvis Presley

Formerly deceased singer. Two years overseas military service experience, U. S. Army. Appointed Special Agent–Narcotics by President Richard M. Nixon. Recently elected postage stamp, defeating opponent by 3-1 margin. Would replace "Star-Spangled Banner" with "Battle Hymn of the Republic/Dixie" medley as national anthem. Opposes term limits.



E-Z Ed Edwards

Part-time musician, Greater Chicago area. Never belonged to a political party. Never had a checking account. Too young for Korea, too old for Vietnam. Lifelong bachelor. No special interests. Lived under every U. S. President since Roosevelt. If elected, willing to serve full four-year term, "if that's what it takes."

—Louis Menand

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THE OTHER FAMILY

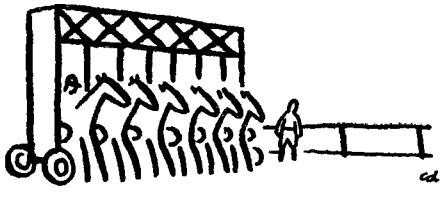
WHEN I worked on a newspaper in Charlotte a few years after college, I was assigned the crazy beat. Mostly I took stories from stringers and wrote obits, but they also gave me the crazies, so they could have fun at the expense of a newcomer. One day a man came to the entrance outraged, demanding to talk to a reporter. He was a crazy, and I was told to go down and hear him out. Smelling sweetly of liquor, he had his story ready. It turned out that his wife had taken up with a police officer, and the officer had then stolen money from him. The crazy insisted there were ramifications concerning the police force, the court system, all of it. The whole town was involved. It was going to be a big story for me, the crazy said. My career as a young journalist was going to take off. When he asked me what I was going to do about his problem and I said I'd look into it, the crazy instinctively knew there was little chance that anyone would ever hear his story. So, to cut his losses, he hit me up for a dollar, which I gave him.

The reason I bring this up is that I was standing on the hot pavement and the glare was coming at me and the cars were passing, and I suddenly realized that this crazy must be some kind of relation to my dead cousin Drew. There they both were, forcing me to listen, making their half sense, tying *me* into their irreversible problems, asking it all of me, and the whole time preaching the way only the addicted can. If the crazy and my cousin Drew hadn't met in a previous life, they had passed each other in this one and were due to hook up in the next.

Drew died in Far Hills, New Jersey, a week after a check I had sent him cleared—and it wasn't just for a dollar, either. "A little sweetener for my head" is what he called it on the phone. When an uncle of mine died and left me some money, Drew said I had "won the lottery," and he saw no reason I shouldn't share the wealth. He used his frequent requests for cash to catch up "family to family," so to speak, since his mother and mine didn't have much to say to each other anymore. Their frigid sisterly rivalry had never really thawed, and this created something of a moratorium on interfamily communications. Drew wanted to change all that. He wanted to be the ambassador, to promote good will and keep the money coming.

It happened that my cousin's final foray into family diplomacy and his subsequent death coincided with my post-graduation period of sitting around the house. I hadn't done much of anything since school, and there was a lot of family talk about an upcoming "life choice." But at that stage I felt that if I were to make a "life choice" it would certainly set off a dismal chain of events. So I did nothing. When we heard about Drew, I was making a salami-and-cheese sandwich at our kitchen counter in Boston. My mother was eating a bowl of soup. She picked up the phone and began taking notes on a yellow Post-it pad. She said, "Uh-huh," and "Oh my Lord," and "I can't tell you how sorry." Then she hung up and told me Drew was dead, and that the funeral was the next day, in Far Hills.

First, there was the question of airfare. At the ticket counter my sister Barbara and I waited while our mother bitched about the price of tickets to Newark. It was outrageous, but the agent said we were lucky to get seats at all. The airline set aside two seats in case of family emergency, she said, but no discounted fares were available at the last minute. There was no getting around it, and why should there have been? Who could have planned a two-week or even ten-day advance notice that Drew would die? But my snack was good—a turkey sandwich with a package of mayonnaise that I smoothed out on the bun like toothpaste. During the flight, I took a look at my frequent-flier mileage. It turned out that this trip pushed me into the free-round-trip-ticket zone—and I hadn't even paid for it, my mother had. Drew's death earned me credit to fly anywhere in the United States except Alaska and Hawaii, so, if you think about it in terms of services rendered, the airline has done better for me than Drew ever did. Drew, as I said, always hit me up for money. What did I get back? Nothing. When I was thirteen he gave me one of his old sweaters, but it smelled so strongly of pot that my mother sat me down for a talk about zombies.



"You don't want to turn into a zombie, do you, Tom?"

My mother said that Drew was a fun guy but he never "gave anything back." By that she didn't mean my money but things in general. She was right. Drew's contributions to community and country were negligible. The only institutions he supported were the rehabilitation center and the country club. Even in his last days, Drew was manic about golf. An overriding theme in Drew's life? Wood. With our grandmother, Nan, he lived on Woodmere Drive. He golfed at the Inglewood Country Club, attended the Woodberry Academy, and later was in and out of the Farwood Rehabilitation Center. The first time I ever got high? With Drew, in the woods.

They found Drew in bed. Like a car out of gas, he had rolled to a halt in Nan's downstairs recreation room. Hers was the last house in a migration from this apartment to that one, from one ex-girlfriend's basement to another one's attic. When there was no place left for him to go, Drew ended up back at his mother's, where, as you can imagine, tempers flared, and she refused to have him. So he washed up at Nan's. I remember her living room with its green-leaf ashtrays and floral prints—a real color wheel. And how strange it must have been to stumble in there at night or hung over the next morning; Drew's bong (the Purple Dragon) would bubble in the rec room, and then he would move upstairs to the love seat—roses and azaleas—and watch television. A tropical world, and Nan's pocketbook still a good hit for a fifty.

It was a closed coffin, and after the service we got into our rented Dodge Shadow and joined the procession to Aunt Simi's house. The cars moved in single file past the bulky trees and the substantial, almost manorial houses. It was a clear Saturday morning in Far Hills, a good day to work in the yard. I saw a man sitting on top of a lawnmower. He looked up and caught my eye. What did he see? I cannot tell. There was nothing particularly mournful about our cars. I was up in the front seat with my mother, and my cousin Jean was in the jump seat of the station wagon ahead of us. She had her back turned to her family, and this gave us

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a good view of each other. On one stretch of road the speed limit said twenty-five, but we were going over forty. The whole thing felt more like a car pool than like a funeral procession.

I rolled down the window and let the autumn air in. The man on his mower, the big, knotty trees, the houses, the air—everything came around and revived us. I, for one, had not died yet, and I felt good and healthy driving down a safe street on a beautiful day in the shelter of suburban Far Hills.

"Do you really think he OD'd?" asked my sister.

"Yes, I think he did, Barb," I said.

"Quiet, you two," said my mother, as if silencing two children in the back of a car. And then, "Well, there's the Rutherfords' house."

ONE Thanksgiving weekend in Far Hills I went golfing with Drew. It was Friday, one of those unnaturally warm days in November when you walk outside and immediately feel cheated. Side by side, Drew and I cruised effortlessly up and down the course in the golf cart. Drew wore jeans and a tan windbreaker. He chain-smoked and bitched and rambled, shutting his mouth only for his ceremonious nick-and-waggle drive preparation. Also he was picky and superstitious about the color of his tees. Blue ones were for shots over water, red were for power, yellow for accuracy. When he looped the ball well onto the fairway, he said, "Sweet," or, "For my head." If he sliced it into the woods, he followed with "Screw your mother!"

It was a good round, and afterward we parked the cart and walked past the clubhouse. There was Mr. McFadden, Drew's trustee, sitting by the window of the Oak Room. He and Drew were involved in an ongoing feud over money. There was a second chunk of a family trust which Drew claimed should be coming to him, but the terms were tricky, and McFadden wasn't having any of it. He knew Drew was a sieve. When Mr. McFadden saw us through the window, he suddenly straightened up and gave a salute. We stood for a moment, dumbfounded at the sight of our own reflection obstructing our view of Mr. McFadden. Then do you know what Drew did? He clicked his heels together and gave the guy a "Heil Hitler."

"By the way," he said to me, the spikes of his shoes tramping the pro-shop patio. "I fucked his daughter last week. I fucked her hard, man. She was loving it."

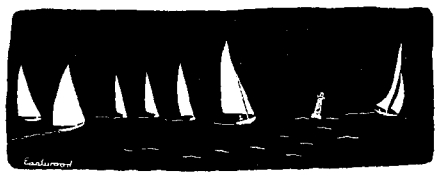
At the water cooler inside the pro shop Drew filled a cone-shaped cup, drank it, and crumpled the thing into the garbage.

"Family planning," he said. "They've got to be kidding me—none of it until I'm married or thirty-five. That's eight years, pushing a decade."

"What happened to that other trust you had?" I asked.

"Blew it, what do you think?"

Drew said he wanted to show me the club whole hog, so we were ushered into the Oak Room. There was this blown-up Remington print that covered almost an entire wall. It was a Western scene. A horse was being ridden by a man with a handlebar mustache. This man, in a double-breasted Union uniform, had on cream-colored gloves that folded back over his wrists like shirt cuffs. His mouth was wide open in a manly and warriorlike scream. With his long-barrelled pistol pointed in the air and his highlighted red cheek, the Yankee looked a little drunk, or perhaps it was just the intoxication of battle. It was hard to tell. The horse was wild-eyed. A charge of some kind was clearly on. Beneath the print a ladies' luncheon was taking place, and one of the women didn't have shoes on. She was in her Peds.



Drew sat down and started talking about the terms of this trust he needed to get his hands on. First off, he wasn't the marrying type, and, second, he had been watching these shows on A&E, a three-part series on the environment.

"The ozone's blowing a huge hole that isn't getting any smaller, and in eight years all that ice flow . . . Well, you know what's going to happen with that," he said. "This whole country's going to turn into wetland."

Drew couldn't wait for that: the golf course, Woodmere Drive, all of it—all of Far Hills submerged into swamp, and sooner rather than later if he didn't get his money.

I watched Mr. McFadden get up and walk between the tables over to where we were. He sat himself down right next to Drew.

"Gentlemen," he said.

"Mr. McFadden, how goes it?" said Drew.

"Fine, Drew, just fine."

Mr. McFadden reached his hand out toward me, holding his tie in close to his chest so as not to let it touch the place settings.

"Hi, I'm Bob McFadden. I don't believe we've met."

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Drew. "This is my cousin Tom."

"I see," Mr. McFadden said. "Does Cousin Tom have a last name?"

"Yes, Nichols," said Drew.

"Well, it's nice to meet you, Tom Nichols," said Mr. McFadden.

"Nice to meet you," I said.

"I take it you boys had a good round of golf?"

"Excellent," said Drew. "How was yours?"

FIREWORKS

There's the whump when they're fired, the rising sigh
they climb, then the stark thump by which they blow
their safes. The fire then shinnies down the sky
like so many dark spiders on glowing
filaments. As thanks for each bright lull, we
loft, not high and not for long, a squadron
of soft, pleased cries. Also we can secede
from this to skulk, to brood sullenly on
the jingo bells, the patriotic gore,
the shattering violence these airy
filibusters flatly mimic on the lake.
Soon we'll unclump and disperse to the dark.
We're home. Lights on. We brush our teeth. Then we
douse the lights and sleep loads its projector.

—WILLIAM MATTHEWS

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"I was at the office, Drew. It's Friday. I've been working."

"That's too bad," I said. "It's an awfully nice day."

"You're right," said McFadden. "But I enjoy it in here." He paused. "You know, Tom, as I get on down the road in this life, it's a little like going back to being a kid again," he said. "It's all about retreating to the simple pleasures."

Drew and I sat there waiting for him to continue thinking out loud, but he didn't. He just gazed off into this thought about returning to childhood.

"Drew, tell me something," he said, standing up. "How long is it that you will be living this way?"

"Excuse me?" said Drew.

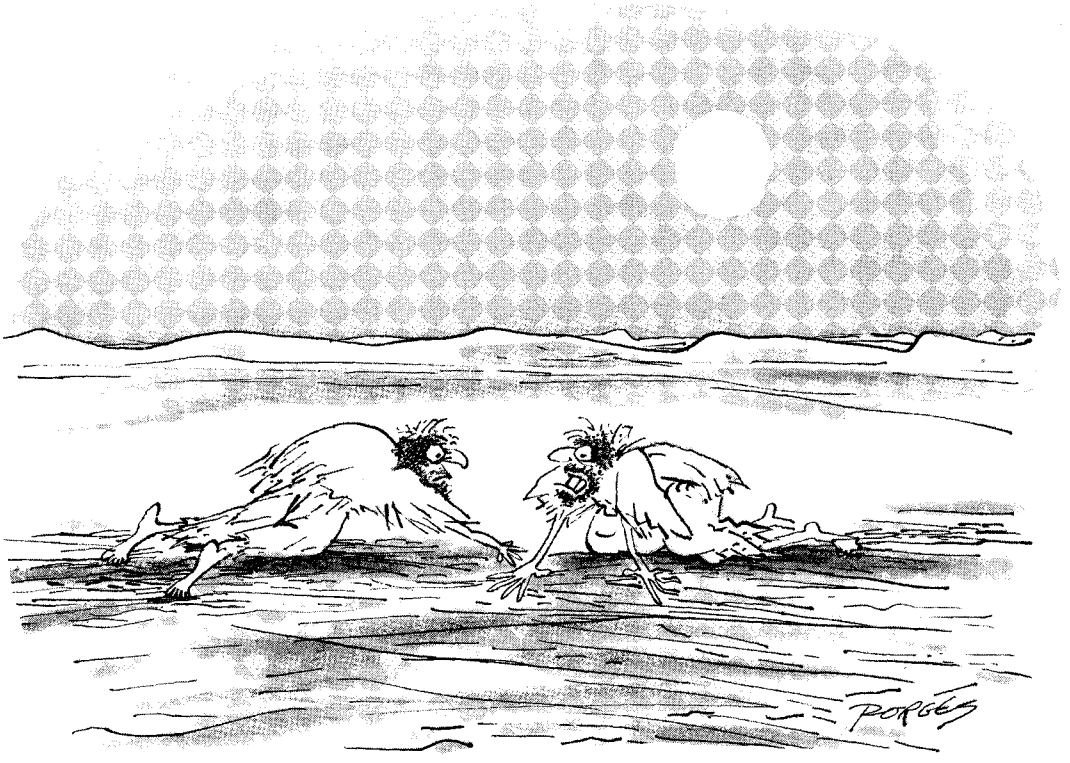
But Mr. McFadden was already walking out of the Oak Room.

For lunch I had a hamburger and some cottage cheese, a Coke. Drew devoured a sundae with an extra order of melted chocolate. Then, with a miniature Inglewood C.C. pencil, he signed for the whole thing on his mother's account.

I stole that pencil, and after Drew died I taped it to a piece of string attached to a pad I used for telephone messages. It was a marker of our last lunch. But after a few months the pencil disappeared, and it wasn't until a year later that I found it again. I was down in New York, staying at a friend's house. We were getting ready to go to a party, and I borrowed his jacket. Smoothing down the outside pocket, I thought I felt a cigarette, but when I reached in to get it, it turned out to be that little green pencil.

"Hey," I said to my friend. "Where did you get this pencil?"

He said, "How should I know?"



"There's a parade on the East Side!"

• •

IT was a little before noon when we arrived at Aunt Simi's house for lunch. Everyone pulled into the driveway, and we all got out of our cars simultaneously. In their dark suits, my uncle Clarence and cousin Howard crunched the gravel looking like the Secret Service. In the living room, Aunt Simi headed for the liquor cabinet, which wasn't so much a cabinet as a closet. The double doors opened, and there were bottles of Beefeater, Canadian Club, Dewar's, you name it. Behind the bottles was a mirror. Even the ice bucket reflected things. Aunt Simi took down a glass. It was narrow at the bottom and wide at the top, but, unlike an airport glass, it held more than it appeared to, and engraved on it was a pheasant in flight. The ice cubes were the size of big dice, and they colored over nicely with Scotch. Aunt Simi poured her drink until there was a little brown pond at the top. It was her wake, after all—her son.

"Would anyone like a drink?" she said.

There was a general silence that resonated with protest.

I chimed in. "Yes, thank you," I said. "I'll have a drink."

"Good," said Aunt Simi, with her back turned. "What will you have, Tom?"

"Please, let me," I said, rising out of a deep couch.

"Don't be ridiculous. I'll mix you something," she said.

Beside her, I whispered, "Please, don't worry about it," and reached for the gin in the back.

"Tom," said my mother.

"Mother," I said, catching an oblong reflection of the room in the ice bucket. It was sad, really. There we all were, my immediate clan putting in some time with the other family. It was ceremonies only, a wedding or a funeral, that got these two sides together. And at Christmas came the wrapped Neiman-Marcus reminder that there were indeed these other people, heard from but rarely seen, moving around somewhere in a different state.

A gin with some tonic and lime was what I made myself.

"Anyone?" I said.

"I'll have a bourbon with ice," said Jean.

I hadn't seen Jean since she was twelve. Now she was nineteen and a pleasant four years my junior. I made her a whiskey-and-ice, some soda. Then, with my creased gray flannels hiked up, my belt secure around me, I walked through the middle of the room feeling watched and embarrassed. I handed Jean her drink and sat down on the end of the chaise longue where she was stretched out. I took a sip of mine and shuddered. Then I took another.

In this other family there was Clarence, Aunt Simi's second husband. His seniority in years had made him appear dignified when they were first

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married, but senility had arrived, and their union, once a humbling respite from both of their first marriages, now seemed shameful and disgusting. Clarence had suffered a minor stroke. He sat by the fire in a flannel suit, and there was something about his collar and the way the knot of his tie was off to one side that made it look as if someone had dressed him. The left side of his face dropped slightly. He was no blood uncle to me. There was my grandmother Nan, who was crying and patting her raw nose with a handkerchief. She and Barbara were very close, and my sister kept one arm around her shoulder and the other on her bandaged knee. The week before, Nan had taken her first fall. My cousin Howard sat in a straight-backed wooden chair. His boyhood mean streak had matured into an appetite for success in his career. Howard was a real go-getter in the software industry in Utah. Originally he had gone out West to explore a business opportunity, but along the way he underwent a spiritual conversion, and he's a Mormon now. Holding up the caboose was Jean, who maintained a defiant generational split from the rest of her family. Drew, my favorite on this side, was not in the room.

"Well, he's visiting a better pasture," said Aunt Simi.

"A better pasture," said Howard, and he put his hand to his forehead as though in prayer. He was a bulky man in his thirties, with a receding hairline, and he had on square, buckled shoes that made him look like a sea captain. Everyone stared at him.

"Christ's sake. It's like a Hare Krishna," Clarence said.

"Simmer down, Clarence," said Aunt Simi.

I leaned back on the chaise longue and felt Jean's high heels against my hips. I pictured her tight cable-knit sweater and her breasts behind me. Then—incredible, really—the first tinges of an erection.

"Oh, Christ," Jean complained. "This is so pathetic."

"Jeanie," said Aunt Simi.

"Don't Jeanie me, Mom."

"That will be enough out of you," Clarence put in.

"I'm going home," said Nan, but nobody moved to help her up.

Jean went over to the bar, flaunting her familiarity with it. With a fresh bourbon, she turned to face her mother's beaming disapproval.

"Drew would have wanted it this way," she said.

Talk about conversation-stoppers. Jean slid in close to me, her ankles nestling softly against my hips now, looking for comfort. Three days had elapsed between her brother's death and the service, and Jean's mourning, once clearly tearful and heartfelt, had turned to pitched exasperation with her family. She shimmied down the chaise, and in my ear said softly, "If I can't get blotto at my own brother's wake, I don't know what."

I turned my head. "Got that straight."

"Not so bad for a first cousin," she said.

"Not bad yourself. What are you up to these days?"

"The usual," she said. "Want to get high?"

"Later."

"You name it," she said. "Later."

LATER, Jean and I sat next to each other at lunch. We began playing footsie.

Since there wasn't much to talk about over soup, Clarence opened up with politics. "I just don't understand why you Democrats don't want to see the deployment of S.D.I.," he said.

This family—minus Jean, who couldn't care less—was what my grandmother on the other side of the family used to call unreconstructed Republicans.

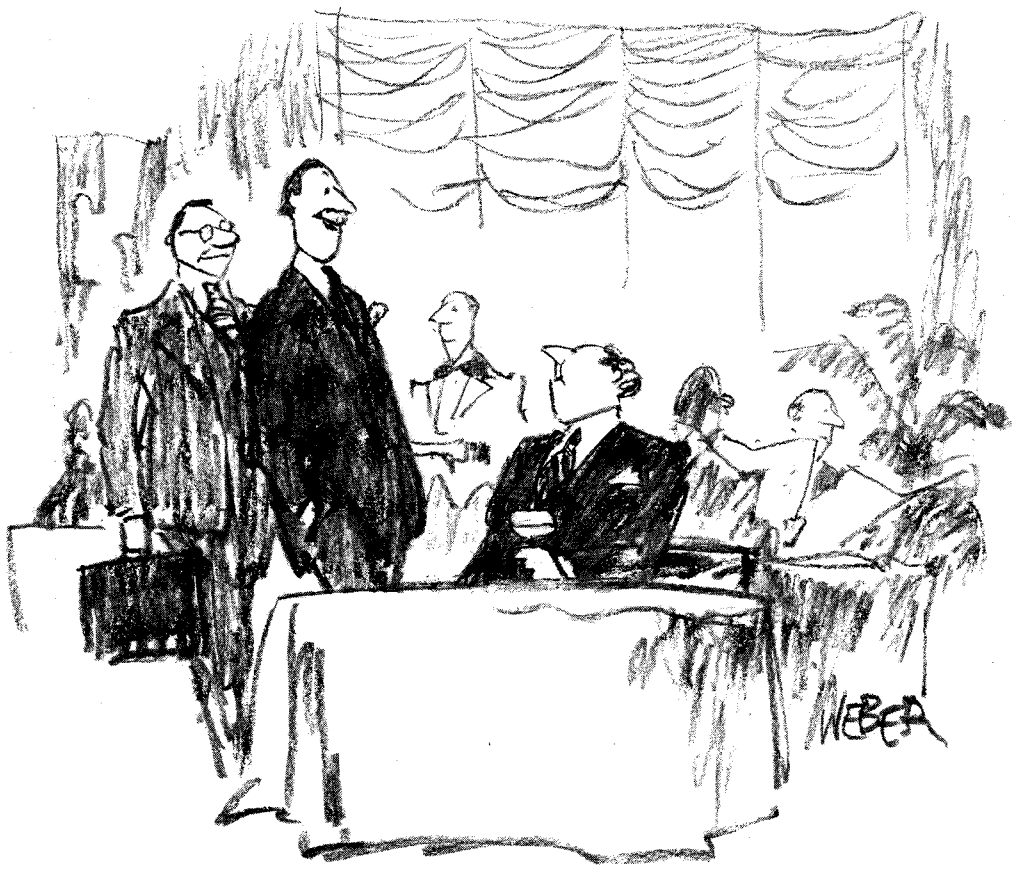
"Well, Clarence," said my mother. "I think what a lot of *people on both sides of the aisle are* trying to say is that it may not be terribly smart to put such an awful lot of money into something that may not work at all."

"Lord knows that's sheer political demagoguery," said Howard. "And I don't think I'm exaggerating in saying that liberal politicians are on the fast track to becoming the Number One security threat to this country, not to mention a drag on good, solid economic growth."

I pressed down on Jean's toe.

"This of all times may not be the right time to talk politics over lunch," said Aunt Simi.

"Yeah, Howard," said Jean. "Why don't you skip it."



"Hi, Ted. Love your latest salary."

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An awful partisan silence crept over the table.

The main course was Welsh rabbit with pieces of crustless toast cut in triangles. I mopped it up, drank my wine, and kept my head as low as possible.

Aunt Simi said, "You know, Tom, we hardly ever see you at all, and Drew always spoke of you in such a kind and really loving way. What is going on in your life these days?"

It was too much for me. I didn't hate Aunt Simi for it; it was just too much. "I'm not trying to be rude, really I'm not," I said. "It's just I've been having to go to the bathroom for a while now, if you'll excuse me . . ." and I got up. It was true, too. I had to piss like a racehorse.

"What *is* going on in your life these days, Tom?" I asked myself out loud in the bathroom.

After lunch, Jean and I walked out behind the house. We were looped. The meal had turned lugubrious at the end, when Aunt Simi decided to make a toast. She had tried to be a good mother, she had done all she could. She was going to level with her family. Drew had his problems, there was no getting out from under that, but now he was in better pastures—and she stuttered and stumbled, weaving along in this vein until she was through.

The outside was like a cold glass of water, and we crossed the back lawn, Jean lurching ahead in her skirt and heels, carrying a bottle of Jack Daniel's. At one point her heels sank into the wet grass, and she fell down.

"These goddam shoes," she said. "They're just killing me, Tom."

We walked each other to the woods, and when we got there she handed me the bottle. I took it and opened my throat up to the warm give-and-take. Then she took out a joint and lit it. I gave her the bourbon and she took a slug. We looked at each other.

"I hate my mother," she said.

"Come on, she's not so bad," I said.

"Go to hell. You don't know what the hell you're talking about," Jean said.

I sat down on a hard floor of pine needles. Then my back was on the ground and I was looking up at the tops of the trees. Some of the leaves had turned, but most of them were still hanging on.

"You're my first cousin," Jean said.

"Yeah, my mother's sister's kid, that's what that makes you," I said.

"Yeah?" she said, and, hiking her skirt up, she swivelled over onto my thighs with the joint in her mouth. She sucked the thing down and then ashed it on me like a cigarette.

"You know, the last days," she said, exhaling. "The last days with Drew were all needles."

"I don't know if I want to hear it, Jean," I said.

"You probably wouldn't."

"What does that mean?"

"Your side wouldn't want to have anything to do with it, schlepping down here for a day visit. You guys didn't know Drew for shit."

"Let's not get into it," I said.

"You're a relative—like, I mean, relatively good-looking is all. But what I'm saying is you—you, Tom—you could be just another boy."

Jean's two eyes were a little out of sync. "I mean, the whole thing, you guys coming here, it isn't that far from a social call," she said.

She planted her hands on either side of my face and laughed. "I'm stoned."

She leaned over me and her hair dropped into my eyes, making me squint. We kissed. After a few moments the feeling was over, and something else got in its way. She climbed off me.

"I kissed a married man once," she said.

"Yeah?" I said. "What was it like?"

"Nothing much," she said. "He had a mustache."

"A mustache?" I said.

"Yeah, he had a mustache."

"Listen, I'm going to get back to the house," I said.

"That's probably what you should do," she said. "I'm going for a walk in the woods now."

"Good. I'll see you, Jean."

"See you, Tom. I'm going to take a little walk. Say goodbye to your mom and sister for me."

"Sure," I said, but I was already turning away. It was getting dark, and from the edge of the woods I could see clearly into the house. Aunt Simi was moving around the kitchen, sticking her finger into the food platters on the counter. Upstairs, a bathroom light flicked on. It was Howard. He stood in front of the medicine-cabinet mirror with his hands in imaginary holsters. Then he drew and shot at himself. It was happening already. The house was falling back into something familiar and easy; everyone was settling down and proceeding as expected. In the hallway, my mother shrugged her coat on, and I could see my sister carrying my jacket through the dining room. We would be leaving soon. No one could see me, but goodbyes were already being said. I paused before crossing the lawn. What was I waiting for?

—Robert Bingham

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THE WORLD OF BUSINESS

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

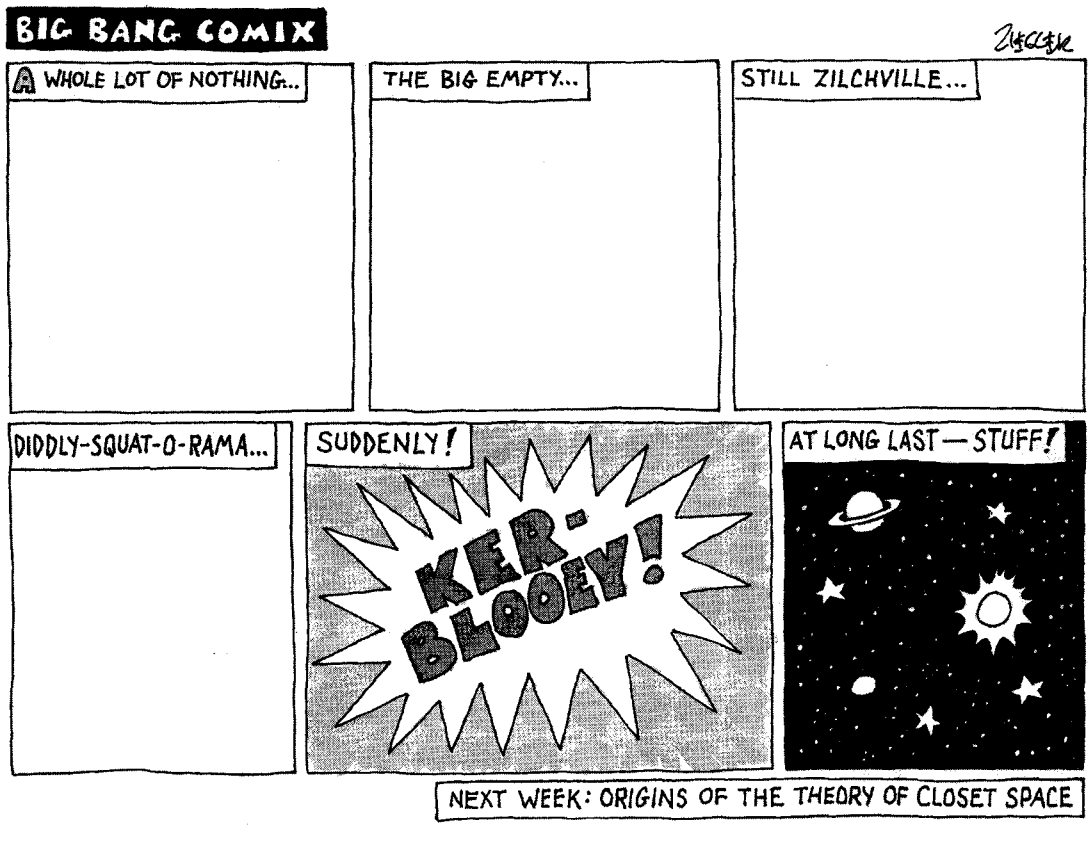
NOT long after the Time-Warner merger was announced, Nicholas Nicholas, the president of Time Inc., met with several of his closest allies in the company. The merger plan, which had been made public in March of 1989, called for Nicholas to become co-chief executive officer of what would be the largest media-entertainment company in the world, Time Warner Inc., with his counterpart, Steven Ross, who founded Warner Communications, Inc. In 1994, when Ross stepped down, Nicholas was to become the sole C.E.O. While Nicholas's political skills had served him well in the decorous world of Time Inc., his supporters expressed fears at the meeting that he was heading into treacherous terrain, for which he was by nature and training unsuited.

Nicholas's backers knew Ross only by reputation, but that was more than enough to trigger their concern. Everything about the man, even his physical stature, was outsized—his canniness, his financial acumen, his largesse, his compensation, his deal-making skills, and, most striking of all, his talent with people. (He seemed able to discern what they really wanted, sometimes better than they did themselves.) Like many a company founder, Ross had never shared power at Warner ("This is not a democracy," he would laughingly chide his executives); he was wise enough to grant his division heads autonomy, but at the corporate level he had never countenanced even a second-in-command. Indeed, he encouraged the notion that the company was an extension of himself, and certainly it had been argued over the years that in his spending habits he treated it as his personal fiefdom. "Steve Ross is the last great pasha of American business," his close friend and longtime lawyer Arthur Liman is said to have commented not long ago. "There will never be another."

In view of all this, the Nicholas loyalists were distrustful of the incongruous match—suspecting that the dowry, Time Inc., was what the ardent Ross wanted, and that his vows to Nicholas would be short-lived. They told Nicholas that he must remain exceedingly alert and wary. Nicholas, habitually self-assured, if not arrogant, waved them off and left the room. He had already heard these warnings many times, from his lawyers and investment bankers as well. Time Inc.'s lawyers, in fact, had concocted a novel plan to protect him—incorporating the provision for his scheduled succession into the company's charter, so that it would be not merely contractual but "ironclad." The charter provision had dropped away during the last moments of negotiations, however, when Warner's general counsel, Martin Payson, told negotiators for Time Inc., "This is ridiculous. We're not doing it!" In its place, Liman and Gerald Levin, the vice-chairman of Time Inc., who had worked tirelessly to orchestrate the merger, drafted a letter, entitled "Statement of Principles," that was flowery, high-toned, and, in terms of dictating succession, meaningless.

In contrast to the nervous cautionary chorus that surrounded Nicholas, Levin was calm, serene, and unfailingly bullish on the deal. He and Nicholas had become committed to it nearly two years earlier, and together they had worked to bring along the chairman of Time Inc., J. Richard Munro; to generate support for the concept in the ranks of the company, but subtly, so as not to appear manipulative; to make it first palatable and then irresistible to the board of directors. It had been a masterly production. And throughout the two-year effort Nicholas—hard-edged, tough, decisive—felt that Levin, easier with people, and a superb facilitator, was his perfect complement.

When it came time to dole out the corporate positions in the newly merged Time Warner, Nicholas (despite the fact that Time Inc. had acquired Warner, and that his lawyers had



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advised him against doing so) yielded to Warner arguments that Warner executives were the more experienced, and Warner won almost every high-level corporate position. What Nicholas exacted in return, however, was the promise—given in a handshake from Ross—that Levin, who was to be co-vice-chairman with Martin Payson, would within a year become the clear "No. 3" of the organization. That way, Nicholas thought, if ever there was a power struggle with Ross, not only could he count on the directors of Time Inc. (on a board divided fifty-fifty between Time Inc. and Warner) but he and Levin would make it two against one at the top.

IN the intertwined histories of Nicholas and Levin, there was little to suggest such solidarity. Their career paths at Time Inc. over the past two decades had intersected repeatedly, but always in ways that undercut, or even seemed to obviate, one of the two men—more often Gerald Levin. The first conflict occurred in 1976, at the fledgling HBO. Levin had recently persuaded Andrew Heiskell, who was then the chairman and C.E.O. of Time Inc., to invest seven and a half million dollars to lease satellite time to transmit HBO's signal to cable systems—a move that soon revolutionized the cable industry. But HBO—where Levin had been president and C.E.O. since 1973, when its creator, Charles Dolan, was forced out—was losing millions of dollars a year, its costs spiralling out of control. Nicholas, then the C.E.O. of Manhattan Cable, was recognized as a deft executive, having accomplished a rapid turnaround of the troubled Manhattan Cable division of Time Inc. in the early seventies; now, in early 1976, Munro, then the head of the video group, asked him to go to HBO as its president. Nicholas refused, because, he says, he would have been working under Levin, and he had felt he needed a free hand. Several months later, Munro returned with the same request, saying that HBO was in danger of being shut down, but this time promising Nicholas that free hand, and Nicholas agreed. "Nick was jammed down Jerry's throat, and Jerry hated it," one executive who worked under the two at HBO told me. "But Jerry had no choice."

It was not only territorial prerogatives that made this such an uneasy rapprochement, on both sides; the two men had little in common. Nicholas, who had joined Time Inc. immediately after graduate school, in 1964, had the more typical résumé for the company—he had attended Andover, Princeton, and the Harvard Business School—but those credentials were in a sense misleading; the son of Greek immigrants (his father was a career naval officer), he had attended all three schools on scholarship, and regarded himself in school, and, subsequently, at Time Inc., as something of an outsider. In 1970, he became the assistant of James (Brass Knuckles) Shepley, who was then the president of Time Inc. and was also a break from the ineffably genteel Time Inc. mold; he was a stark contrast, for example, to the silken Heiskell.

"The roughest and toughest Time Inc. executive of my day was James Shepley," Hedley Donovan, who in 1964 had succeeded Henry Luce as editor-in-chief of *Time*, wrote in his 1989 book "Right Places, Right Times." He went on, "His blowtorch style of argument was applied with absolute impartiality to anybody, his technical superiors included, and he was a highly effective executive. (It helped that he was very smart.)"

Nicholas's father died in 1970, the same year that Nicholas became Shepley's assistant, and several people who know Nicholas well believe that he came to model himself on his boss, whom he admired intensely. Nicholas saw Shepley as someone fundamentally willing to do the hard thing, and such willingness became a signal Nicholas trait—in style as well as in substance. Often, Nicholas exhibited an abrasive edge that inspired fear and dislike in some of the people who worked under him, but Nicholas had concluded early that it was more important to be respected than to be liked. "When there's something tough to do, Nick often becomes more tough and

"I'd like you to see a botanist. You exhibit many of the symptoms of Dutch elm disease."

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more adversarial than necessary, as though he were steeling himself—and then he *really* does it," one longtime colleague told me recently.

Another close associate declared that Nicholas was critical, if not contemptuous, of an ambience of ease and privilege that typified Time Inc.: "Nick was known early as a little brash, someone who would say things that were anti-establishment. He felt that Time Inc. was so white-shoe, slipping and sliding off three-Martini lunches. He saw a cushy unreality in the place, and saw himself as someone whose mission was to say, 'We have to pull up our socks, tighten our belts.' "

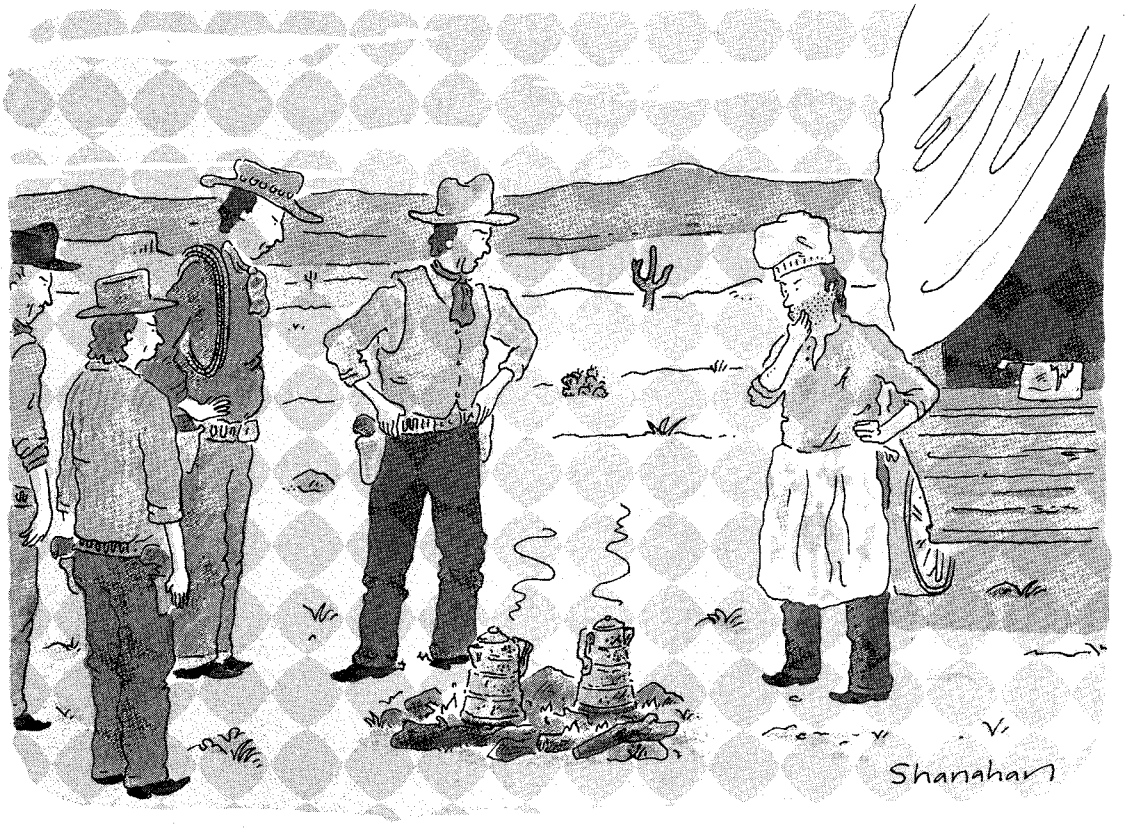
Nicholas may have viewed himself as a reformer at Time Inc., but Levin saw Nicholas as establishment, or, at least, as someone who could easily pass for it, and saw himself as the archetypal outsider. The son of a dairyman, Levin had grown up in a religious Jewish home outside Philadelphia—his mother, in fact, had entertained thoughts of his becoming a rabbi, because he was so accomplished a Hebrew student that on occasion he was allowed to conduct services in their synagogue even before his bar mitzvah, at age thirteen—but by the time Levin entered college he considered the Judaic philosophy confining and parochial. At Haverford, a small Quaker college (it had an honor system, which, he commented recently, "endowed me with a moral certainty about certain things that I carry to this day"), he majored in Biblical studies, and became imbued with the lessons of the New Testament. He strove to cultivate humility and deny ego; since he decided that keeping his college papers was an act of ego (did not one keep them in the hope that someday someone might read them?), he burned them, as, he believed, Virgil had done with his papers.

Unlike Nicholas's quite standard route to Time Inc., the path that Levin took was eclectic. After graduating from Haverford, in 1960, he went to the University of Pennsylvania Law School; practiced law at the decidedly white-shoe firm of Simpson Thacher & Bartlett; and then left for the Development and Resources Corporation, where he worked for David Lilienthal, the former head of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and then for the International Basic Economy Corporation. Levin has always stressed his commitment to public service as the motivation for this early career move from law to business. However, his first wife, Carol, was quoted twenty-five years later by Helen Thorpe, of the New York *Observer*, as saying, "I don't think he wanted to represent the seats of power, he wanted to be there."

While Nicholas worked in the magazine division for his first six years—the heart of the company founded by Henry Luce—Levin entered Time Inc., in 1972, through HBO, which was like coming in through a side door, so incidental an adjunct to the company was that small programming division. Being somewhat indifferent to his appearance, Levin cut an odd figure among the legions of trim, attractive, well-turned-out young Time Incers; he was short and unprepossessing, sporting doubleknit suits with ties that often jarred. And he was awed by the leadership of the company—Heiskell, Donovan, and Shepley—who, though they were individually very different, together seemed, he later said, "heroic figures," and a breed apart from most of the people he had known.

The triumph of the satellite, however, won Levin an acceptance at Time Inc. which might otherwise have always eluded him. He became known as the in-house intellectual—or "resident genius," as Heiskell liked to say—and it was a role that he seemed to revel in, perhaps recognizing that his anomalousness at Time Inc. could be not a handicap but a major advantage.

Levin eschewed the more mundane exhibitions of power. He hated to fire anyone, and rarely did. He did not seize the opportunity to claim credit for his achievements (the satellite, mainly) with Wall Street analysts or the media. His manner was professorial and enigmatic, at times verging on the oracular. Over the years, as Levin rose in the hierarchy, he continued to marvel aloud at how unlikely it was that he should find himself in the



"Durn it all, Cooky! We's payin' you good money to remember which one is decaf!"

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aerie of corporate power. And some of his colleagues became persuaded that he did indeed inhabit a loftier plane—a cerebral, or even a spiritual, one—than they or their fellows.

At the same time, Levin was no stranger to power, particularly in its subtler manifestations. One person who worked with Levin at HBO in the seventies told me that Levin was "a glutton for information," and explained, "He is genuinely interested in what people are doing, from a corporate chieftain to an assistant copy editor. And then, because he has all this information, he becomes an expert on everything, and someone you rely on."

"Jerry's idea is control the information, control the power," another colleague said.

Levin possessed a remarkable retentive capacity, and he would often exhibit his prowess—much like the boy who, having memorized baseball statistics, recites them at every opportunity. A former Time Inc. executive recalled, "Upon arriving at the office in the morning, Levin frequently remarked to me, in his quiet, oblique way, 'Well, that was quite an announcement, wasn't it?' And I'd think, Oh, my god! What did I miss? No one, of course, read as much as Jerry did. And then he'd be so pleased that he'd caught me. I thought it was a way of establishing dominance. And I would say, 'Jerry, don't play "Gotcha!" ' "

Just as facts were power, so was language. Levin habitually used words in conversations about business which sometimes seemed pleasantly surprising and evocative and at other times seemed pretentious and highfalutin but were in all cases conspicuous, setting themselves (and their utterer) apart. In an interview with me in 1989, he referred to the state of Time Inc. at a certain point in its history as "an unfinished symphony"; in a deposition that he gave in litigation that ensued in the Delaware courts when Paramount Communications made its bid for Time Inc., in 1989, he referred to the company's "genetic predisposition" to dealing with its system of church and state, and also testified that a given event had occurred "toward the time of the summer solstice." Levin was not unaware of his penchant. In the same deposition, in commenting upon notes he had written while he was orchestrating the Time-Warner merger, he said, "I was, as I sometimes do, trying to use a more poetic word like 'embracing' rather than what you would normally find in business notes."

Many of Levin's colleagues were awed by the force of his intellect, which for them was highlighted by his powers of expression. However, one man who had worked for Levin for years told me that sometimes he would leave Levin's office after a discussion thinking, Wow!—and then, proceeding down the corridor, would scratch his head and think, Wait a minute. What did he really say? Often, this man added, Levin used his facility with words in such a way that he was able to lead all those attending a meeting, some of whom held diametrically opposed views, to believe that Levin agreed with them.

While many people who worked at HBO in the late seventies credit Nicholas with its salvation, it may be that its success was due more to the unlikely and unwilling couple of Nicholas and Levin. Nicholas immediately fired several layers of senior management people, hired strong new executives, took a much tougher line in deals with the Hollywood movie studios that were HBO's suppliers, and made alliances with key people in the cable industry, the most significant being John Malone, of Tele-Communications, Inc., the country's largest operator of cable systems. Levin, meanwhile, was the organization's nurturer—warm and likable, if opaque, and so genuinely interested in programming concepts ("He would engage us in what seemed like Socratic dialogues," one employee recalled) that HBO employees felt that he strongly supported them. In any event, the over-all result was happy. HBO was in the black within fifteen months of Nicholas's arrival, and after that profits rose steadily.

In 1979, Andrew Heiskell recom-

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PASSES

WHITE PASS

For a real thrill, don't get gas
at Naches. Pass the abandoned
fruit stands, pass the shuttered fishing cabins,
pass the sign that says "White Pass," pass
Tieton Dam, pass the filling slit
of Rimrock Lake—not a lake,
really, but a vacuum sucking water
out of the William O. Douglas
Wilderness—pass the signs that say, "WATCH
FOR FALLING ROCK," pass walls
of rock wearing what look like hairnets
to keep their loose parts
in place, pass sheer air yawning open
to your left and sheer cliffs rising up
to your right, but, whatever you do, pass
no one before you pass over
the Pass. Shift. Then
start going down.

SNOQUALMIE PASS

The talk of chains always started somewhere
between Issaquah and North Bend, sometime
after we passed the Swiss chalet
that sold Rocky Road candy with milk chocolate
or dark chocolate and marshmallows
and nuts. Did we remember the chains, would we need
the chains, would we be required to stop the car
below the Pass and put the chains
on? The more the talk of chains,
the more certain it was that we would have to gun
the engine and go without stopping
for eating or sleeping or anyone
stipulating chains, or even for gas,
because the engine was so fuel-efficient,
it could run on fumes.

CASCADE PASS

You can't drive there. Drive,
if you want, to the trailhead, thirty-six hundred
feet up, one lane, pullouts, sand,
gravel, trees rearranged
for the convenience of the North Fork
of the Cascade River. Park
across the valley from the glaciers
hanging off Johannesburg, pick up a pack
that pulls your shoulders
into your back, climb thirty-three switch-
backs, two miles, a couple
of thousand feet. Stop only
if you can stand the flies. Above the tree line
there are no flies, there is just
moraine—fields of pebbles the size
of cars, scabs
of snow. The Pass is just sitting
up there, five thousand feet in the air,
a saddle of green grass and nodding
alpine flowers that seems
to say, *Doesn't this*
look safe? Don't
look now, but it doesn't care
how you got here. It is massively
indifferent, waiting, glacially
patient, for the mistake you must
make—given how you crawled
up here—waiting for you
to start to enjoy the view.

—CAROLINE FRASER

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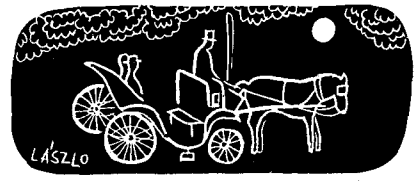
mended to the board that Richard Munro succeed him as Time Inc.'s C.E.O. the next year—a decision that he says he has since come to regret. "I was surprised when Munro announced, within a month or so of his appointment, that he would retire in ten years—effectively abdicating," Heiskell told me. "It's as though he stopped growing—or, more, regressed—from the day he became C.E.O." The two contenders for Munro's recently vacated post of video chief were Nicholas and Levin, with Nicholas the odds-on favorite. He was credited with the turnaround of both Manhattan Cable and, more impressively, HBO. He had also strongly advocated in the late seventies that Time Inc. buy all of the A.T.C. cable system, in which it then had a ten-per-cent stake; in 1978, the company bought it, for less than two hundred million dollars, and by the time of the Time-Warner merger it was valued at eight billion. Levin, for his part, was credited with the idea of the satellite transmission and, to a degree, the success of HBO. To the surprise of many—and the chagrin of Nicholas—Munro chose Levin. It was clear that Munro was personally very fond of Levin, but Nicholas thought that Munro was also dazzled, and seduced, by Levin's verbal virtuosity.

When the paths of Nicholas and Levin crossed again, four years later, it was an unhappy occasion for Levin. In the interim, Nicholas, as the Time Inc. "strategy chief," had accomplished the spinoff of Temple-Inland, Inc., a forest-products division, to kudos from



Wall Street, and had moved up to the post of chief financial officer of Time Inc. Munro, singularly ill equipped for the finance-driven eighties, had come to rely so heavily on Nicholas that many saw Munro's role as primarily ceremonial. ("Dick was the Queen, and Nick the Prime Minister," one person commented.) Now Munro replaced Levin with Nicholas as video chief, and shifted Levin to the strategy position.

Levin, who, according to one friend, "has trouble running a business, because he sees too many options," had led the company in a foray into subscription television (said to have caused a hundred-million-dollar loss), and then in one into an experimental teletext information service (said to have caused a twenty-five- to thirty-million-dollar loss). The most calamitous venture by far to occur under his aegis as video chief, however, was a deal to

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form TriStar Pictures, with CBS and Columbia Pictures as HBO's partners. HBO spent more than a billion dollars for something that should have cost five hundred million—a loss so embarrassing to Munro that he directed that the extra five-hundred-million-dollar expense be amortized against Time Inc.'s profit-and-loss statement over many years so that Wall Street wouldn't detect it.

The TriStar deal, which also stipulated that HBO would provide capital for a percentage of the cost of all Columbia films, placed no cap on the amount of money HBO might have to invest. "We revised it. We had to. It was an open-ended lien on Time's treasury," recalled Francis (Fay) Vincent, then the C.E.O. of Columbia Pictures and now the commissioner of baseball, who has since become a close friend of Levin and praises him as having "a theological dimension . . . rare in a man of commerce." Nicholas, by contrast, "has a harder edge to him," Vincent continued. He recalled that after Munro called him, saying that Time Inc. wanted to "retrade" the deal, he had gone to their offices. "Nick said, 'We want you to tear that piece of paper up,' " Vincent recalled. "And I said, 'How do I, as an officer of Coca-Cola'—which owned Columbia at that time—'justify a billion-dollar gift?' Nick said, 'We won't do business with you unless you do.' And I said, 'War is war. Coke will buy ten per cent of Time stock.' And then Dick Munro, who is a friend, said, 'No, no, no'—and he calmed everybody down."

Levin, in an interview in the *Times* about six months after he assumed the post of company strategist, sounded as though he was disillusioned with video, where he had had his first, stellar success, followed by a flock of failures. Emphasizing that much of the company's planning would be directed toward putting out new magazines, he commented, "Print is our soul and heartland and it is not as vulnerable to wide swings and sudden consumer disenchantment. There has to be a fairly simple identity that drives a company and when you get too far away from it you begin to have problems."

Nicholas, meanwhile, after taking over Levin's position at video, cut a broad swath. Among others, he fired Frank Biondi, the chief executive officer of HBO, who with Levin bore responsibility for the TriStar deal, and who had been engaged in a long and debilitating power struggle with the HBO executives Michael Fuchs and Winston Cox. Nicholas made Fuchs the C.E.O. of HBO, and assigned Cox, an old friend, to work with Levin on strategy.

Biondi went to Munro to plead his case. Munro's door was always open; anyone with a grievance would be heard. But, as was generally true of Munro, he had only sympathy to offer. He is reported to have told Biondi that he thought his firing was terrible, but that there was nothing he could do about it. At a small dinner for Biondi, his wife, Carol, is said to have been expressing her animus against the absent Nicholas when Levin's second wife, Barbara, reportedly joined in with her own diatribe about Nicholas's having "screwed" Levin. Upon Levin's allegedly chiding her not to say such things about Nicholas, she is said to have retorted, "What do you mean? All you talk about at home is how much you hate him!"

In 1986, when the Time Inc. board prodded Munro to recommend his successor as C.E.O. so that the transition following his 1990 retirement would be a smooth one, the consensus in the upper echelons was that Nicholas and Levin were the favored contenders, though Kelso Sutton, the head of magazines, was also a candidate. Several people who were then Time Inc. executives told me that they had privately urged Munro to choose Nicholas.

Even Nicholas's supporters acknowledged his weaknesses. His innate conservatism led him to miss opportunities—taking a larger share of the Westinghouse Group W cable operation, for example, or buying fifty per cent of the Turner Broadcasting System. (Time Inc. ultimately joined a consortium to buy thirty-seven per cent, but the deal was more costly as well as smaller than the one proposed earlier.) Furthermore, it seemed unlikely that as a leader Nicholas would ever be able to inspire the assembled troops. He had intellect, decisiveness, and sharp financial skills, but there was no magic to Nicholas. One could almost say that he was anti-magic—constitutionally opposed to doing anything but the hard thing, the hard way, and allergic to what he took to be sugarcoating, and also to grandiloquent concepts, of which

"Well, finally—a man who gets it!"

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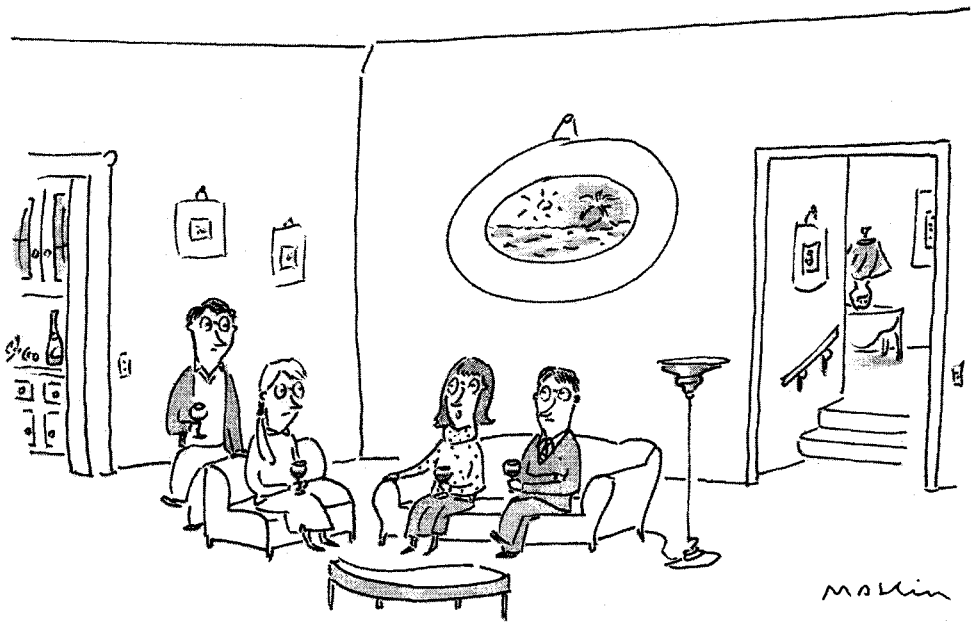

"As usual when we're caught between a neo-Gothic revival and a neo-Victorian revival, Edwin and I have done nothing."

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he would sometimes say that they "couldn't stand the scrutiny of a sharp pencil on the back of an envelope."

Looking at the strengths and weaknesses of both Nicholas and Levin, Munro may well have wished that he could meld them into a composite. For while Nicholas was risk-averse, Levin was risk-prone. While Nicholas was hard-edged and brutally candid, Levin was elliptical. And while Nicholas was somewhat bloodless, Levin was awash with free-floating enthusiasms—particularly in the area of sports and entertainment. Munro was tempted to name Levin—after all, no one in the company referred to Nicholas as the resident genius—but Levin's track record, both as an operator and as a deal-maker, was poor. (This was a point that Nicholas had not failed to make to board members, with whom he had a far better relationship than Levin did; he is said to have told them that the company needed Levin, but that Levin must never again be given a position of operating authority.)

One colleague who saw Levin at the board meeting where Nicholas's ascension to the presidency was announced told me that Levin rarely showed his emotions but that on this occasion, having learned of the decision less than forty-eight hours before, he appeared "devastated." Many in the company believed that Levin would leave, and that Nicholas, in the manner of most corporate chieftains who have just bested longtime rivals, would make sure he did.

On the contrary, Nicholas urged him to stay. Levin, along with several others, was taken off the board, in a move to reduce the number of insiders, but, according to one person, Levin had a secret understanding with Nicholas that within a year or so he would be reappointed to the board, as the company's vice-chairman. Whether or not it was prearranged, this, at Nicholas's initiative, is what occurred. Munro was delighted—his composite achieved!—but, having had an unhappy experience himself with a second-in-command foisted upon him, he had been scrupulous that the decision be Nicholas's alone. Levin, in explaining to a friend and colleague why he had decided to stay, characteristically spoke not of his own ambitions but, rather, of a larger, mystical-sounding design. "First, I'm going to find what is right for this company—and once I have, I'll know my work is done, and then I will go" is the statement that his friend recalled.

Levin's sources in his quest, however, were decidedly of this world. For the past two years, in attempting to develop a strategy for Time Inc., he had relied heavily on assistance from McKinsey, the corporate-advisory firm. Almost from the outset, he had been committed to what he called a "transforming transaction"—for, as was widely recognized both inside and outside the company, Time Inc. had lost its procreative powers, and Levin had concluded that it could not build its way into the media world of the future on its own. Levin had always been enamored of an alliance with a movie studio, but there had been no support within the company for such an alliance, so by 1985 he had devised a program, illustrated with elaborate slide presentations, entitled "New Directions"—specifically for the expansion of Time Inc. by acquiring or merging with newspapers, VHF broadcasting stations, and, perhaps, a television network.

At Levin's urging, Time Inc. bid about a billion dollars for some television stations owned by Storer but lost to George Gillett (currently in bankruptcy). Time Inc.'s management held discussions with executives from the Gannett newspaper chain and with CBS, but succession was always an obstacle to any deal, since by 1986 Munro was adamant that the leadership of the combined companies should pass to Nicholas.

As a way of resolving the succession issue, Levin consistently advocated the idea of co-C.E.O.s—an idea that some of his colleagues considered curious, since it was such a patently unstable structure. One colleague of Levin's told me that when he had raised doubts about co-C.E.O.s with him, Levin short-circuited the conversation by replying, "If I didn't believe that my man"—at that point, Munro—"was up to it, I wouldn't be endorsing it." There were also conversations with Martin Davis, the chairman and C.E.O. of what was then Gulf & Western, but this prospect was shelved, according to one Time Inc. executive who was involved, after "word came back that Davis had characterized Munro as a lightweight and said that he, Davis, would have Munro out of a job in six months."

It was in May of 1987 that Nicholas, at Michael Fuchs's suggestion, called Steve Ross and asked to see him. The two met a couple of times more, discussing the possibility of some kind of joint venture in cable. Then, in early August, Nicholas, flying back with his family from a safari in Kenya, stopped overnight in Zurich and, as he recalls it, sat up most of the night excitedly writing notes on a little hotel

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pad. On the plane home, he added to them, and when he got back to his office, he says, he gave them to Levin, who was the better writer, and asked him to put them in the form of a memo and send it to Munro, with copies to Thayer Bigelow, who was then Time Inc.'s chief financial officer, and to Nicholas himself.

This memo, signed by Levin, described in large part what came to pass. It called for the merger of Time Inc. and Warner Communications (and also the Turner Broadcasting System, but that, of course, has not occurred) and depicted the metamorphosed Time Inc. as an "entertainment oriented communications company." It enumerated all the advantages of a Time-Warner combination, and its potential obstacles as well. According to a colleague of Nicholas's, about a year after it was written—when it began to seem within the higher echelons of Time Inc. that the memo's proposal was destined to become reality—Nicholas complained to him that Levin was taking credit for the memo, and said he had wondered, briefly, whether he should assert his authorship but had decided that it didn't matter whose idea it had been—they were a team.

And so they seemed to be. As the two men pursued their common goal of the Time-Warner merger, there was no visible trace of the tensions that had once existed between them. Levin's notes, produced in the litigation against Paramount, show him to have been, certainly on the Time Inc. side, the master choreographer—endlessly coaching Munro, studying Ross, ingratiating himself with his counterpart Warner negotiator, Oded (Ed) Aboodi, and heightening his own sensitivity to every nuance of the deal.

And if Levin, back in the days of his satellite stardom, had not sought the limelight he now seemed altogether comfortable basking in its glow. In interviews with me in 1989, he described the idea of this transforming transaction—his—as one that had resurrected his career at the company. In Levin's deposition in the Paramount litigation, moreover, he testified that he had written the memo, and he went on to speak about it at considerable length, saying that it had become clear to him that Time Inc., in combining with Warner Communications, would be fulfilling its "manifest destiny."

However, when he was asked, finally,

Sing to the tune of
I've Got Rhythm

You've got problems,
You've got bad days,
You've got real life,
Something more you're hungering for.

Buy this Gershwin,
Love and romance,
Happy ending,
Who could ask for anything more?

The original Broadway cast recording of "Crazy For You," the new smash musical hit featuring 19 Gershwin songs is now available on CD and cassette from Broadway Angel Records. To order by phone call 1-800-551-7200. They're going for a song.

Original Broadway Cast Recording
1992 Tony Award Winner – Best Musical

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whether it was fair to say that the memo "outlined the subsequent course of action that Time followed," he demurred slightly and—recovering his more accustomed, unassuming persona—replied, "I am a self-effacing individual . . . and I don't think I could answer yes to that question. It was my own statement of purpose and design."

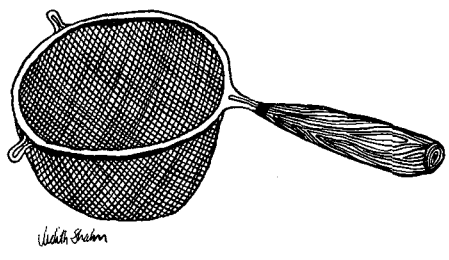
IN May of 1990, Munro retired, as he had announced he would ten years earlier—but with at least seven and a half million dollars more due him than he would have received if the merger had not taken place. He had had only about six months' experience as co-chairman with Ross in the new Time Warner, but he told friends that that was enough to show that it was not for him. Ross's meetings, which typically continued for hours, drove him to distraction. During their courtship, Munro had told me he found Ross "fun to be with," but being in business with him, it turned out, was a different story. One director told me that Munro had recounted a trip that he and Ross took to Los Angeles, on one of Warner's corporate jets. Through the six-hour flight, Munro told him, Ross had talked deals to him non-stop, and Munro found all that talk exhausting; then, upon arriving at the Beverly Hills Hotel, Ross turned to the bleary-eyed Munro and said, "Let's just order some Chinese food and keep going." Munro, a pleasant person who had seemed out of his depth as C.E.O. of Time Inc., told one colleague that the happiest day of his life was the day he retired.

Munro and his wife decided to have two farewell parties at their home, in New Canaan, Connecticut, on successive nights: the first one for their friends from the old Time Inc., drawn from most levels of the company, and the second for the more senior corporate executives of the new Time Warner. The first night went as planned except for a speech by Nicholas during which he made an extemporaneous attack on Munro's predecessors—particularly Heiskell—that many thought gratuitous and almost bewilderingly inappropriate. By midafternoon of the second day, however, so many of the executives from the old Warner side had said they couldn't come (because of sudden, urgent meetings) that the Munros cancelled the dinner. They invited some neighborhood friends over and gave the rest of the huge catered spread to organizations for the homeless. "Dick knew then that he was history," one former Time Inc. executive commented.

In a culture as intensely familial as Warner's, such behavior might be deemed especially surprising, even aberrant. But Munro was not family, and, with the merger achieved, there was no longer any need to pretend that he ever would be. To those on the Time side, however, this rude rebuff confirmed what they had already sensed—their subordination and their negligibility in this new world. Time Inc., of course, had acquired Warner, cashing out the Warner shareholders and making the high-level Warner executives exceedingly wealthy, but, apart from those bonanzas, it both looked and felt as though Warner had acquired Time Inc. After the fiasco of Munro's farewell party, which added insult to injury, Nicholas, it is said, remarked to a colleague from the old Time Inc., "They just don't conduct themselves the way we do."

As far as Nicholas's associates can recall, that was one of the few comments critical of Warner that he made in the early months of the merger. In public, Nicholas gave every appearance of having resigned himself to his role as Ross's subordinate; the only sign of impatience he showed occurred in private conversation, when he reportedly commented, on occasion, "You know, Steve is not a well man." Nicholas is said to have learned before the merger that Ross had been operated on for prostate cancer—something that was not then widely known.

Nicholas had never been especially popular with the troops at Time Inc., but he had been generally thought of as a strong, decisive executive, and, popular or not, he was now their surrogate, so many disheartened Time Inc. employees were waiting eagerly for Nicholas to start laying claim to his, and their, territory. Instead, they found an even more remote and relatively passive Nicholas, apparently unwilling to fight for his old Time constituencies. In the words of one executive from the Time side, "The Time people kept looking around and saying to one another, 'Where is Nick?' "



Nicholas had not become infatuated with Hollywood, as some speculated, or seduced by the lavish new perquisites of the Time Warner corporate life. Nor had he fallen under Ross's spell. Rather, what he was attempting to do was to find a means of coexistence that would enable him ultimately to reap the benefits of the bargain he had struck. One person who for many years had been close to both companies, but especially close to Warner, told me, "After the merger, I gave Nick one piece of advice. I said, 'Keep your head down, don't make waves—and in five years you'll be the head of the largest media-entertainment company in the world.' "

Though Nicholas probably did not realize it at the time, he was faced with a no-win choice—for in accepting Ross's sovereignty and repressing his own instincts in order to survive he was yielding not only primacy but that which made Nicholas quintessentially Nicholas. And as he became a paler, more tentative version of himself he began to alienate some of his constituents. The ally whose loss would be perhaps the most damaging was Michael Fuchs, the C.E.O. of HBO. Fuchs, whom Nicholas had elevated to that post when he fired Biondi, had been a Nicholas stalwart; in the past, he had often said that he had been Nicholas's "campaign manager" (lobbying Munro, and lobbying others to do the same) when Nicholas was jousting with Levin for the presidency of Time Inc.

The merger was a blow to Fuchs, however; he would have preferred that Time Inc. make its way into the world of entertainment by expansion through HBO. And the first rift between Fuchs and Nicholas occurred in the summer of 1988, before the deal had been consummated, when the two men met with Ross and with Warner Brothers' C.E.O., Robert Daly, and its president, Terry Semel. Fuchs was arguing that HBO should start making a limited number of movies every year for theatrical release, and Daly and Semel rejected that idea out of hand. Ross, as usual, supported his executives, but Nicholas, to Fuchs's dismay, did not support him. "Michael is very loyal," one of his colleagues commented, "but he demands extreme loyalty in return."

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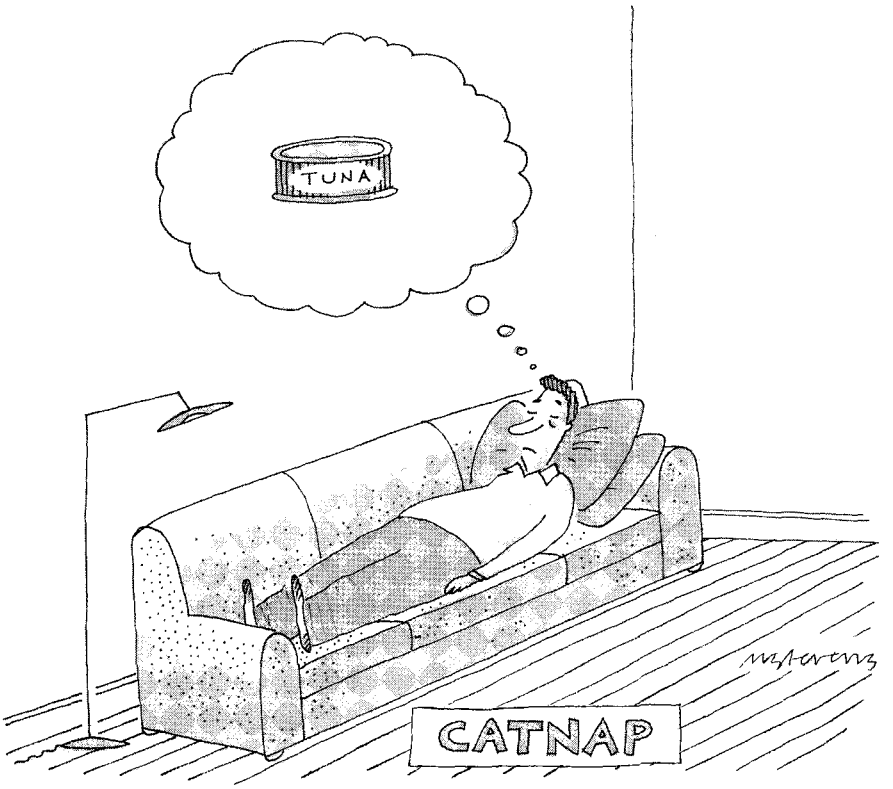
In October of 1989, after the battle fought by Time and Warner against Paramount had been won and the merger agreement had been set, Fuchs and Levin, who had been friends since Fuchs joined HBO, in the mid-seventies, went to dinner at New York's Plaza Athénée. There Fuchs is said to have told Levin that Nicholas would never be a strong enough leader to make it as C.E.O. of the combined companies but that Levin could, and that if Levin were to supplant Nicholas he would end up leading the company when Ross retired, and that he himself would back Levin in such a bid for power—shared power, perhaps, since some believe that Fuchs saw himself becoming Levin's partner and, possibly, successor. Levin's response was said to have been characteristically enigmatic.

While this was almost certainly the first solicitation that Levin had received to mount a coup against Nicholas, the idea that Nicholas was unlikely ever to achieve his ascension—because there would be no conjugation between him and Ross, and he would somehow be dispatched—was practically dictum on the Warner side, and also among many outside observers of the match. Levin, who is both astute in his observations of people and extraordinarily farsighted, focussing always on the long term, should have been the first to apprehend the enormous likelihood of Nicholas's being subverted; he had, after all, been studying Ross and the Warner environment for more than two years. In any event, friends pointed out the obvious to him. Fay Vincent, for one, recalls, "I told Jerry that co-C.E.O.s would not work, and that Steve Ross would prevail."

And when, in an interview with Levin in 1989, I asked him about the notion that Ross might be looking at him, and not Nicholas, as his more likely successor, Levin had replied, "I have a missionary zeal that relates to this company, and therefore I am committed to bridging some gap in communication and style—and you don't have to be C.E.O. or co-C.E.O. to have an impact."

During 1990, the relationship between Fuchs and Nicholas continued to deteriorate. Fuchs, warring with Daly and Semel over the amount that HBO would pay for Warner Brothers movies (he thought it should be less than it was before the merger), reportedly was furious that Nicholas did not intervene and force them to agree to his terms. Worse, Fuchs apparently felt that HBO and he had been diminished by the merger—that they had become a disproportionately smaller and less important part of the whole, with little influence on the decision-making process of the parent company. Also in 1990, there were a few reports in the press that Robert Pittman, a longtime Ross favorite, who was the president of Time Warner Enterprises and a contemporary of Fuchs, might be slated to take over Fuchs's job.



Fuchs is reported to have felt that throughout this trying period Nicholas gave him no support. And in early November of 1990, at a meeting with Nicholas and a couple of dozen HBO staff people Fuchs exploded at Nicholas, lambasting him for not supporting the division. Several days later, he wrote Nicholas a note of apology. But later that month, it is said, at a company retreat in La Quinta, near Palm Springs, Fuchs, during a late-night walk with a close colleague from the old Time Inc. side, discussed taking steps to try to bring about the ouster of Nicholas and the promotion of Levin.

WHILE Nicholas was losing an erstwhile ally, Levin was winning a powerful new one in the Warner camp, in Oded Aboodi. The groundwork for this relationship had been laid during the pre-merger period, when Levin and Aboodi, as the chief negotiators for Time and Warner, spent many hours together, frequently poring over configurations of the deal until midnight. Aboodi's demeanor and conduct—in an interview, in a deposition, and, some say, in negotiations—can be evasive, and can also appear disingenuous, but Levin apparently saw him differently. In my interview with Levin in 1989, he had nothing but high praise for his negotiating counterpart (who, as was actually suggested in passing by the Delaware court, had badly outnegotiated him).

More than any other individual in the company today, Aboodi is a creation of the Warner environment—someone whose very existence is emblematic of Ross's sovereign and idiosyncratic ways. Born in Jerusalem, of Iraqi descent, Aboodi emigrated to this country as a youth and graduated from New York University, where he subsequently obtained an M.B.A. His relationship with Ross dates back to the mid-sixties, when, as an accountant at Arthur Young & Company, he worked on the National Kinney (Warner's predecessor) account; by the late seventies, he was also organizing tax-shelter investments for Warner executives. In 1980, Aboodi left Arthur Young to go out on his own. At roughly the

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same time, Solomon Weiss, a Warner assistant treasurer, who had handled Ross's personal financial matters, came under investigation in the Westchester Premier Theatre scandal. (He was subsequently indicted and was ultimately convicted of mail fraud, racketeering, and perjury.) Aboodi then began handling Ross's personal financial matters, and also doing tax work and investment-related work for the company and its executives.

During the eighties, Ross came to rely more and more on Aboodi, and in the last couple of years Aboodi has become Ross's closest associate and most trusted adviser (and, recently, an executor of his will). Some people, pointing out that Aboodi is involved in every significant financial transaction at the company, have suggested that he functions, in effect, as its chief financial officer. To say that, however, is to minimize his role. In fact, there is in the lexicon of conventional corporate life no title that adequately conveys what Aboodi does; the descriptive term that comes closest is "éminence grise," but many call him, more pejoratively, Ross's Rasputin.

Aboodi refers to himself as a "nonexclusive" employee of Time Warner, meaning that his agreement with Ross permits him to work for others as well. Still, the overwhelming majority of his time in the last couple of years appears to have been spent on Time Warner business. His investment-advisory and tax firms occupy rent-free office space in the Time Warner headquarters, and Aboodi receives a salary and benefits from Time Warner. Because he is not an executive, however, he is free of any corporate accountability. What he is paid for his work on the numerous transactions he is involved in on behalf of Time Warner is never disclosed either in public filings or to the board. (The Time-Warner merger was an exception, since his fee—eight million dollars, as well as the fact that he would be co-managing a hundred-and-fifty-million-dollar investment fund—had to be disclosed, like the fees of other negotiators.)

In addition to unreviewable compensation, there are other advantages to the novel arrangement that Ross and Aboodi have devised. Several people who have known Ross for more than twenty years claim that he has long preferred to have an outside adviser, because he appreciates the deniability that separation gives. However, the arrangement has always been something of a conundrum, they say, inasmuch as Ross has never trusted anyone who was not a member of the Warner family but instead was genuinely independent, such as a member of an investment-banking firm; so his favored practice was to have someone very close, or utterly controlled, who was nominally "outside." One example of the usefulness of Aboodi's nonbinding affiliation involved Solomon Weiss; it would have been impossible for Weiss to return to work at Warner after his conviction, but Aboodi has provided work for him at his tax firm.

With Ross's backing, Aboodi has also started a bank—an extracurricular activity that might conceivably have been open to question if he were an executive of Time Warner. He is the chairman and president of the Berkshire Bank, a small, commercial institution, in New York City, opened in 1989; its purpose, according to one investor, is "to be a small private bank where wealthy investors and depositors could get loans processed quickly without a lot of red tape."

Aboodi began to organize Berkshire in 1988, in concert with two associates, Susan Fisher and Robert Greenwood, who had worked in the area of private banking and had had Aboodi and Ross as clients—and, through them, many members of the Warner extended family—since at least the early eighties. As chief operators of Berkshire, however, Fisher and Greenwood seemed an odd selection for someone as sharp as Aboodi to make. In private banking, an area where stability and long-term relationships are paramount, and moves to different banks are relatively infrequent, Fisher and Greenwood had been nomadic—moving from Chemical Bank to Marine Midland and on to Manufacturers and Traders and then to Berkshire within roughly six years. They severed connections with at least two of those banks under duress—leaving many millions of dollars' worth of bad loans behind them. One of the banks, an officer told me, "has suffered twenty million dollars in chargeoffs"—unrecoverable loans—"and the meter is still running."

Fisher, whose talent was marketing ("She brought us the good, the bad, and the awful," an executive of one bank where she worked has said), and Greenwood, trained in credit, were to be the president and the chief operating officer, respectively, of Berkshire, according to an application they submitted to the New York State Banking Department in 1988. One person told me, however, that because of Fisher's and Greenwood's track record the department "insisted that they not occupy those positions." Another banker, James Carey, was brought in as president and C.E.O., and Fisher became the director of business development, and Greenwood the director of account management.

Berkshire was capitalized with seven million dollars (later raising $1.6 million more). The Aboodi family, its largest single shareholder, owned ten per cent of the stock; Ross, too, was a substantial investor, and so was Warner Music's chairman, Robert Morgado, who is an Aboodi ally and a director of the bank; and many of the other investors came from the Warner extended family—both current employees and former ones, some of whom continue to have business relationships with the company.

Today, three years after opening, the bank has suffered continuous large losses ($2,369,000 for 1991, following a loss of $1,127,000 for 1990); its management is said to have recently tried to sell it, without success. According to one investor, many loans Berkshire made were to "very big-time players in real estate." (At least one troubled loan, this investor added, was to Arthur Emil, a New York developer who was a general partner, along with Aboodi, in the Palmer Square development in Princeton, New Jersey, on part of which the Bank of New York, the major lender, has now foreclosed.)

James Carey resigned a year ago, and Fisher and Greenwood, who had married, resigned last year; Greenwood's resignation is said to have been brought about as a result of an investigation by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. According to one person familiar with the investigation, Greenwood had made loans to a number of people who were in fact substitutes for a single individual, thus enabling that individual to evade the lending limit.

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Aboodi has assumed Carey's position while a search is being undertaken for a president and senior lending officer, but it is Aboodi's son, David, aged twenty-six and a vice-president, who is actually charged with running the bank day to day—a state of affairs that some investors view negatively. And the bank has lately been engaged in completing a Memorandum of Understanding, which is a confidential censure and prescription for remedial action, issued by the F.D.I.C. and the New York State Banking Department.

Some members of the Warner extended family have invested in both of Aboodi's troubled projects—the Berkshire Bank and Palmer Square—and it is they who tend to feel especially benighted. Several told me that they had invested because of their understanding that Aboodi was going to be heavily involved in both entities—and especially the bank—and that they had had no idea he would be fully engaged at Time Warner. "He's the chairman of the bank and he's never there," one investor said. "He's always in Japan or France for these Time Warner deals."

This person and others have described the frustration of attempting to obtain information from Aboodi about their investments. "Ed has a very Middle Eastern mentality, secretive by definition," one said. "He understands that the law requires disclosure, but he will report only what he feels he really has to. He has a familial style—taking in only members of the Warner extended family—and he is the paterfamilias. He is *very* close to the vest, so you never know what he is thinking—and since he is the paterfamilias you're supposed only to follow him, not to question him. He is a terrible manager—he never delegates. Once again, he is the paterfamilias, so the ultimate decision is always his." The investor added that Aboodi was nearly unreachable these days. "At the end of a day, he must have dozens of unreturned calls—and then, when you finally do get him, he is all smiles, as though there were nothing wrong. You know, when things go badly—and when they can't get answers—people get angry. And today there are a lot of angry people out there." This person continued, "But Ed has only one master, and that is Steve. He is Steve's instrument, his factotum, his alter ego. I must say, if I were a director of Time Warner I would want to know: Who is this Aboodi? What are the company's relationships with him? How much is he being paid? What decisions is he making?"

The Time Inc. executives who worked to bring about the merger may not have apprehended the pervasiveness of Aboodi's power, but they were aware of its unorthodox nature. One of them commented to me at that time, "Ed Aboodi and Arthur Liman serve and service Steve Ross in a personal way. They've done a good job of handling that, but obviously a system where someone is so personally dominant is not a system of checks and balances."

This executive acknowledged then that Ross expected Time to become more like Warner, with a board taking direction from a strong C.E.O.—a C.E.O. so strong, in fact, that to serve him was to serve the company, because in a sense he *was* the company, and therefore relationships like those of Liman and Aboodi with Ross were beyond the board's scrutiny. The Time Inc. executive asserted, however, that, contrary to Ross's expectation, it was Time Inc.'s style of formal corporate governance that would prevail in the merged entity. "Even though he's sixty-two years old, and very wise, Steve Ross is going to be exposed to a whole round of experience he hasn't had," the executive said. "He is not used to a board he doesn't control. But that was the tradeoff he made here. A very significant one."

Since the merger, however, Aboodi's role—and recompense—have only grown in significance, and have gone unquestioned by the merged Time Warner board. For his work on the Toshiba–C. Itoh transaction, for example, Aboodi is said to have received about fifteen million dollars. One director, after telling me that he and his fellow board members had no idea what Aboodi was paid and had never inquired, explained their silence this way: "Steve is always extolling the virtues of Ed. He will say 'Ed labored beyond the call of duty' on this or that deal. So I would say that the directors keep quiet for political reasons—they understand the importance of Aboodi to Steve."

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las were like oil and water—the one sinuous and secretive, the other corporate and blunt. At one point, in early 1991, Nicholas clashed openly with Aboodi, questioning the propriety of his role at the company; Aboodi is said to have threatened briefly to quit, and to have complained that his "feelings were hurt to think that Nick did not trust" him.

Levin, however, cleaved to Aboodi. Almost immediately, they began to work together on what Ross dubbed his strategic alliances—partnerships with companies in Europe and Asia which would expand Time Warner's global reach. Lacking financial skills himself, Levin now came to rely on Aboodi's, as he had on Nicholas's earlier. More than that, he became mesmerized by the way Aboodi and Ross conjured up deals together; what he had experienced at Time Inc. seemed sophomoric by comparison, and he is said to have felt that he had finally joined the major leagues. The bond between him and Aboodi intensified, in what appeared to others to be mutual admiration. A Time Warner executive recently told me, echoing a view shared by many in the upper reaches of the company, "Jerry and Ed are like brothers."

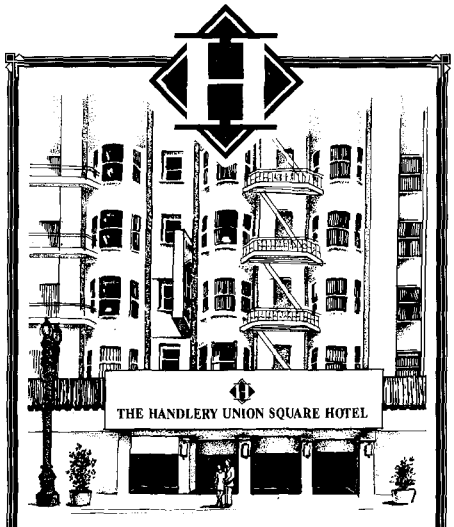
IN the late winter of 1991, Levin and Aboodi came to Nicholas's office, and proposed that Levin be made chief operating officer, or C.O.O., of Time Warner. They were suggesting not only that Nicholas be relieved of that position—since, they pointed out, he had more than enough to occupy himself as co-C.E.O., and the change would, in a sense, ratify his parity with Ross, making him seem less of a "junior partner"—but also that the dual reporting structure that had been put in place at the time of the merger be revised. In the existing system, Time Inc. divisions reported to Nicholas, and Warner divisions to Ross (with cable divisions reporting to both), but, they said, it would make more sense operationally—and would also be more "symbolic" of the companies' union—if all divisions reported to one person; namely, Levin.

Nicholas, who had been C.O.O. for nearly five years and was eager to devote himself more fully to being co-C.E.O., welcomed the idea. Since he had been including Levin in all his meetings, Levin would be well prepared; and while Nicholas had long considered Levin weak as an operator (as video chief and, before that, at HBO), he had had those posts a number of years before, and he thought Levin was now better equipped for such responsibility. However, he told Levin and Aboodi that he doubted whether Ross would agree to it, since Ross and his Warner division heads (particularly Robert Daly, of Warner Brothers) guarded their reporting relationship jealously. The three then walked down the corridor to Ross's office, where Ross, upon hearing the proposition, immediately and enthusiastically endorsed it—much to Nicholas's surprise.

With that move, the stage was set for the eventual excision of Nicholas, and his replacement with Levin. It allowed Levin access he had not previously had to Warner division heads, with whom he set about building rapport. It also caused Nicholas to be somewhat less in touch with the businesses, including those on the Time side, and to lean even more on Levin, whose thirst for information now, more than ever, could not be slaked. Nicholas, who apparently still believed that he and Levin were functioning as the team he had envisioned at the time of the merger ("Jerry and I" had become for him almost a figure of speech), is said to have commented to one colleague, "Jerry is my right arm and my left arm."

When I interviewed Nicholas in 1989, he responded to my raising the possibility of conflict between him and Ross as co-C.E.O.s by saying, "I'm basically an operating person. I have deal-making skills but not Steve Ross's [deal-making] skills. We're not going to collide a lot." After little more than a year of life in the merged companies, however, Nicholas was increasingly intent on using his own skills to move the company in the direction in which he, as co-C.E.O., thought it should be going, and he was therefore content to cede the operating duties to Levin.

Perhaps, if the merger had been consummated in the form in which it was conceived, as a stock-for-stock combination—rather than the cash buyout of Warner, which encumbered Time Warner with more than eleven billion dollars of debt—the tensions that began to fester between Ross and Nicholas would not have become so extreme. But the need to unburden the balance sheet of that huge debt load worked as a catalyst, bringing to the



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fore those predispositions—in Ross, as a founder, and in Nicholas, as a manager—which were most stereotypical, and were diametrically opposed.

Nicholas wanted to reduce the debt by selling assets. It is a classical strategy (dubbed in business textbooks the "weed the garden" approach), and one that was ritually employed in the buyouts that transfigured the eighties. By mid-1990, Nicholas had drawn up a list of what he considered peripheral assets—so unaligned with the rest of the businesses, he told Ross, that once they were sold Ross would not notice that they were gone. On this list were cable systems in non-strategic areas, which by Nicholas's calculations would bring about three billion dollars; music publishing (Warner/Chappell), which would bring about a billion; and a miscellany of other items, including Hasbro stock, which would bring another billion.

Ross is constitutionally not a seller. He has, of course, sold during his long and varied career, but since he started Warner Communications, in 1972, he has done so, in the main, only when he had to. "Founders are notorious for not being able to sell assets," Nicholas told me. "Each asset is like a child. Professional managers, on the other hand, are not as sentimental. They sell assets if it's necessary. They don't think in such grandiose ways."

Ross had a different plan: the strategic alliances—which he has long insisted are not primarily a vehicle for raising capital but, rather, constructs vital to Time Warner's realizing its potential as a global force. Ross was a vocal critic of the sale of Columbia Pictures to Sony and, subsequently, of MCA to Matsushita; the same benefits (a software-hardware alliance, and expanded access to the Asian marketplace), he believed, could be obtained by selling minority interests, while maintaining American ownership and control.

Ross articulated his general view of this global corporation of the future—not "a huge monolith but, rather, a parent of many smaller companies" (each of which would "operate autonomously . . . and . . . retain the national identity and cultural orientation of the country in which it operates")—at the Edinburgh International Television Festival, in August of 1990, where he was the featured speaker. To highlight his perspective, the 1990 Time Warner annual report was printed in six languages.

Nicholas liked the idea of setting up small local companies in Asia and Europe to operate as joint ventures, but he was strongly opposed to selling even a minority interest in Time Warner's assets as a means of raising capital. As he saw it, "I wanted to sell the weeds, and Steve was selling the roses." According to a couple of Time Warner advisers, Nicholas was also leery of Japanese partners—fearful, one adviser said, "of letting the Japanese get their nose under the tent."

By early 1991, Ross, Aboodi, Levin, and others at Time Warner had devoted more than a year to pursuing a strategic alliance, in what must have seemed, increasingly, a quixotic quest. While it was true that C. Itoh, a Japanese trading company, had approached them in early 1990 with the idea of a partnership, Time Warner executives or their agents had since approached more than twenty companies, including Canal +, Bertelsmann, Siemens, Allianz, Unilever, Générale des Eaux, Société Générale, Toshiba, Hitachi, Nippon Life, and Matsushita, as well as a few titans, such as Giovanni Agnelli.

Meanwhile, Nicholas—blocked from pursuing his chosen strategy, and essentially hamstrung—began to chafe at Ross's dominion. Ross had always presided over Warner, but earlier the atmospherics of his reign had been different, rife as the place was with levity and a strong sense of camaraderie. In the last several years, with the enormous expansion of Ross's kingdom, and his concomitant wealth and power, he was said to have grown more isolated and imperial, surrounded at the corporate level by a handful of people who tried to anticipate his every wish and rarely, if ever, contradicted him.

Within this insular world, everything—even the dictates of time—seemed to yield to him. Nicholas later recalled that executives would wait in their offices for a summons to a meeting with Ross, and that, once it finally began, it would usually continue for hours, while Nicholas himself, typically, was the only one who might say that he had to leave to keep another appointment; the rest generally stayed for the duration and appointments were forgone. On one occasion, Levin kept a lunch date waiting for well over an hour, because he found it impossible to tell Ross that he had an engagement.

Even when Nicholas was on his best behavior, his very existence as a co-C.E.O. apparently taxed Ross's patience. One Time Warner executive recalled that Liman and Aboodi "told me how agonizing it was for Steve to have to sit in meetings and look to Nicholas, to make sure he was in accord, when for all these years he was so used to just making his decisions"—he snapped his fingers—"like that."

Ross's seigneurial prerogatives embraced things large and small. While at Time Inc., as at most major American corporations, the annual meeting was held at roughly the same time each year, at Warner historically—and now at Time Warner—it was scheduled at Ross's discretion. Nicholas did not consider this an issue of great moment, but he did believe that it "set a tone." Moreover, it must have seemed to Nicholas a relatively innocuous area in which to exercise his will as co-C.E.O. He spoke to Levin, and, according to Nicholas, Levin agreed with him; but several days later, Nicholas says, Levin told him that he thought they "should do it Steve's way." One colleague of Nicholas and Levin remarked to me, "I was in a lot of meetings with Nick and Jerry where Jerry said, 'I agree with you, Nick,' but what he said to Steve I have no idea."

THE summer and fall of 1991 were Time Warner's, and especially Ross's, crucible, for in the eyes of many enraged shareholders Ross had become the personification of all that was wrong with the company. The crisis began with the announcement of the ill-conceived rights offering in June. With the resurgence in the equity markets in the spring, Ross and his colleagues had become enamored of the idea of raising capital in the public markets. Because they wanted to raise an extraordinarily high amount—about three billion dollars—they had chosen a rights offering; that is, an offer giving only current shareholders the right to buy newly issued stock. Not only

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was such an offering unusual in this country, even in its plainest form, but they had added to it a complicated, coercive twist. Existing shareholders, in order not to have their ownership percentage diluted, would have to subscribe to the offer, but, since the price of the shares would depend (in a sliding scale) upon the ultimate level of subscription, the subscribers did not know what price they would pay for the shares they were promising to buy.

The shareholders' reaction was scathing: after the offering's announcement, Time Warner's outstanding shares lost almost twenty-five per cent of their market value (or over one and a half billion dollars). And while the offering-price range had reflected a tantalizing discount on the price at which Time Warner stock was trading before the announcement, once it had plummeted shareholders felt forced to buy in order not to have their percentage diluted, and to buy at prices that were not yet known but that now could be above the market price.

The shareholder rebellion, moreover, had been altogether foreseeable. The investment-banking firm of Goldman, Sachs had declined to participate in the offering, and Felix Rohatyn, of Lazard Frères, is reported to have agreed to do so only out of deference to his nearly thirty-year-long relationship with Ross and his company, and on a promise from Arthur Liman to convey Rohatyn's negative assessment to the board during the presentation to directors on the offering. (According to the recollection of several directors, Liman did so only obliquely, in passing.) Other investment bankers involved in the deal are also said to have warned that this structure was not their first choice—although, if the company was insistent on raising three billion dollars, it was probably the only alternative.

According to several Time Warner advisers, the person Ross heeded most closely was, as usual, Aboodi. While the intensely complex structure of this offering appears to have been devised at Merrill Lynch, many people outside the company who know Aboodi refuse to believe that it was not, at least to some degree, his handiwork—and some people referred to it at the time as "an Aboodi special." Aboodi is famous for his proclivity for financial intricacy. ("Give me long enough, and I can make any deal complicated," he will often say, half-joking.) It is, indeed, a proclivity—or, more, a passion—that he and Ross share, and it probably accounts in large measure for their closeness; when it comes to financial design, they, and they alone, speak the same tongue. As one adviser told me, recalling the private meetings held at the company on the subject of the rights offering, of which Aboodi was a strong supporter, if not a part-author, "The remarkable thing was to see how belligerent Levin was in support of this structure and of Aboodi."

In the midst of the public maelstrom created by the rights offering came press articles proclaiming that Ross's compensation for 1990 was 78.2 million dollars. As Ross repeatedly pointed out, 74.9 million of that represented a onetime payout from the merger for his interest in Warner. (He will receive 121.1 million more over the next several years.) Ross defended his bounty as a founder's due.

Critics, however, argued that Ross had never owned more than one or two per cent of Warner Communications or its predecessor companies, thereby never exposing himself to downside risk, and that he captured all the upside by virtue of a 1987 Warner contract—created by Ross and Aboodi—that was a dense, multifaceted farrago of stock options, deferred compensation, bonuses, and posthumous provisions and guaranteed him about fourteen million dollars a year over a decade, provided that the company's stock and earnings rose ten per cent each year. In the merger, Levin and Aboodi had negotiated Ross's Warner payout according to the terms of this contract, and then negotiated the contract's renewal, with the granting of a million eight hundred thousand stock options in Time Warner.

Ross was pictured as avarice incarnate. His allies from Warner in the seventies have told me that the Ross they knew had loved money and, especially toward the end of that decade, had lived in majestic style, but that venality had by no means been his defining characteristic. Several—perhaps out of their affection for Ross, like the parent who attributes an errant child's behavior to the influence of the child's friend—blamed Aboodi, arguing that a good adviser would have reined Ross in and persuaded him that that which is patently excessive carries its own retribution. Instead, these friends believed, Aboodi and Ross—with their congenital secrecy and love of legerdemain—fuelled each other's more negative traits.

For many months before the rights offering, Ross and other Time Warner executives had been talking to analysts and the press about strategic alliances, and suggesting, in general terms, that one would soon be realized. Even then shareholders had been angry. Paramount Communications had bid two hundred dollars a share for Time Inc., and the Time Inc. board had rejected that offer as inadequate, its investment bankers having declared that Time Warner stock would quickly rise by more than two hundred dollars a share, and would be trading by 1993 at between three hundred and two dollars and three hundred and eighty dollars. But ever since the merger the stock had been in the doldrums, trading at between sixty-six dollars and a hundred and twenty-five dollars through 1990 and the first half of 1991. Now, added to the bombardment over the coercive rights offering and Ross's gargantuan compensation, there came articles claiming that Time Warner executives had no credibility when they spoke about a coming deal with an Asian or European partner.

In the road show to promote the rights offering, Ross was characteristically voluble about his vision of the future of Time Warner and of its global partnerships. But Nicholas, appearing with Ross, began to distance himself from such forecasts. On one occasion, he said, "I am in accord with Steve on his philosophy, but I'm from the Yogi Berra school—when we have a deal, we'll tell you." Nicholas must have been rankled by taking the heat for events about which he had so little say. He had endorsed the rights offering, but only because he felt that at that point there was no alternative: Ross would not agree to sell assets; no deal had yet come through; and capital had to be raised. Indeed, given the ratios stipulated in covenants on Time Warner's bank loans, if the company did not find a way of reducing its debt by the end of 1992 it would be in violation of the covenants. The worse things got, in the summer of 1991, the more thoroughly convinced Nicholas must have become that if he had been able to do things his way all this public

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outcry and the concomitant damage to the company's image and its finances could have been averted.

Some Warner division heads later said that they noted a schism between Ross and Nicholas at this time. "Just my impression from reading articles about the rights offering. I got the sense that it was all Steve's doing," Terry Semel, of Warner Brothers, commented. "Two good partners would never find a way for one of them to take the rap more than the other. They would close ranks."

"Once you say 'I told him not to do it,' that's the beginning of the end of a partnership," Robert Daly agreed, adding that he and Semel spoke from their own experience: they had been partners at the helm of Warner Brothers for eleven years—an unusually long union, and tenure, in Hollywood.

By early July, it seemed increasingly likely that the S.E.C. would withhold its approval of the rights offering, because of the lack of disclosure of what, in the end, investors would pay for their shares. Nicholas, who by this time believed that Ross would almost reflexively reject any alternative that he proposed, got in touch with an investment banker at Salomon Brothers and asked if the firm could lead an underwriting for a "plain vanilla," or fixed-price, rights offering that would raise two to three billion dollars—and, if it thought it could, to propose the deal to Ross. That revised issue, to which the S.E.C. did not object, offered the stock at eighty dollars a share—a healthy discount on the stock's trading price—and was successfully completed in early August, raising 2.76 billion dollars. With the offering finally accomplished, Ross and his lieutenants immediately turned to their hoped-for strategic alliance with C. Itoh and Toshiba—something that had been under discussion, sporadically, since early 1990. The news, in mid-August, that this deal appeared to be coming to fruition finally destroyed even the semblance of a working partnership between Ross and Nicholas.

Nicholas, long opposed to what he thought of as "selling the roses," had come to believe that, after all this time, there was little likelihood of the prospective Japanese partners' coming up with the two billion dollars that Time Warner wanted. Since at least the start of 1991, that was the amount that Time Warner executives had been telling the board they planned to garner from such a deal. According to Nicholas, the two sides had not been able to come to terms in the spring of 1991 because C. Itoh and Toshiba were willing to invest only five hundred million dollars each.

In August, however, Nicholas learned that this was the amount of the deal that was brewing. A subsidiary, Time Warner Entertainment, was to be created, in which would be put Time Warner's cable businesses, Warner Brothers, and HBO. C. Itoh and Toshiba, for their combined billion dollars, would own twelve and a half per cent of those divisions. (Time Warner eventually hopes to sell up to fifty per cent of these divisions.) There was also to be a local company in Japan, TWE Japan, which would be owned fifty-fifty by Time Warner and the Japanese partners.

Nicholas went to talk to Levin. He was contemptuous of the billion-dollar deal; he believed that he could raise a billion dollars by selling the most incidental assets. He hated losing a percentage of the upside of Time Warner's "crown jewels." He was worried about the issue of control, and in this he was not alone; Daly and Semel, too, were adamant that Warner Brothers not give up control of its marketing and distribution in Japan. (They ultimately became satisfied that it would not do so.) He believed in the idea of local partnerships, or joint ventures, around the world, such as HBO Olé, in South America; HBO in Asia; a Time Warner Cable joint venture in Sweden, and another with HBO in Hungary; and a Warner Brothers movie-theatre joint venture in Japan—all of which were recently formed, and none of which involved the foreign partner's putting up capital for an equity stake in Time Warner, or in its key businesses.

And Nicholas didn't accept the argument that these foreign partners' ownership of equity stakes would accelerate the growth and profitability of Time Warner; to him, the downside was clear, while the upside (from such possible benefits as a hardware-software alliance, for example, though no specific application of technology was spelled out) was fuzzy at best. There was, furthermore, no business plan, no agreed-upon set of expectations, and to Nicholas's way of thinking this lack was a recipe for disaster in a joint venture. Levin, Nicholas later recalled, said he concurred.

Within the next couple of days, Nicholas says, he encountered Aboodi in Levin's office, and questioned him about why he was going forward with a deal for only a billion dollars—a deal to which he, Nicholas, was opposed. Aboodi was noncommittal. Nicholas then began to berate him in a raised voice: Did he work for Time

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Warner, as he was paid to do? Or did he work for Steve Ross? After that, Nicholas seemed impelled, headlong, on a collision course. He asked Cravath, Swaine & Moore, the historic outside counsel of Time Inc., to examine the papers on the Toshiba–C. Itoh transaction. (Liman's firm, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison, had been engaged to work on this deal. Although at the time of the merger management indicated that the two law firms would share equally, Paul, Weiss has received at least three times as much post-merger business from Time Warner as Cravath has.) Nicholas also talked to a Cravath senior partner, Samuel Butler, about his opposition to the deal, and his willingness, if necessary, to challenge Ross. Butler advised him, repeatedly, to make a list of the directors and count those whom he considered certain supporters; Levin, despite whatever he had said to Nicholas about concurring with him, would clearly not be one.

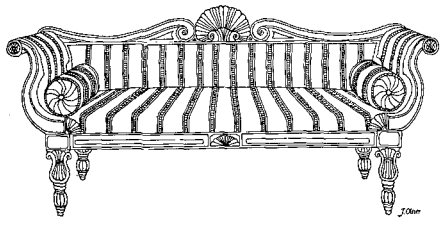
Liman came to see Nicholas and said that Ross wanted to bring the matter before the board. Nicholas replied that if Ross did so he would lose. That may have been mere bravado, but Nicholas insists today that he believed at the time that if he laid before the directors his strategy for dealing with the balance sheet (something he had never done) it would be the more likely winner. Improbable though this seems—after all, it was because of Ross, the progenitor with the fecund imagination, that many of the Time directors had voted for the merger in the first place—matters never reached that point. Nicholas spoke to Dick Munro, who was on the board, and Munro called the Time Warner director Donald Perkins (a former Time director), who, in turn, called Nicholas; but Nicholas did not speak with any other directors.

Instead, when Ross came to see him Nicholas suggested that they should try to resolve their differences, and not ask the board to do it for them, and he said he would attend a presentation on the deal, made to him by all those working on it. This meeting, which was held several days later, was very un-Warner-like: a carefully prepared, well-organized, ostensibly democratic process, after which all those involved, having heard the pros and cons, agreed that the deal should go forward—Nicholas included.

Asked about his having thrown down the gauntlet only to retrieve it, Nicholas said, "I couldn't be a yes-man. But I was trying, still, to be a team player. I thought that I would continue, do my best to contain the damage—and that time was on my side."

NICHOLAS had retreated, but on the Warner side the breach had become irreparable. One Time Warner executive has said of the presentation on the Toshiba–C. Itoh deal made to Nicholas, "That was when a bunch of us knew the world was going to change." Through the fall of 1991, a persistent, well-cultivated strain of anti-Nicholas sentiment spread through the upper levels of Time Warner. Nicholas, increasingly isolated, and unaware of what was being marshalled against him, was the victim of the corporate structure in which he had earlier acquiesced—one consisting wholly of Warner loyalists, with Levin the single other Time person. Nicholas continued to believe, as he had from the start, that he and Levin were a team, and refused to entertain any doubts on that score; when one executive from the Time side came to see him in the early fall and suggested that Levin might not be a trusty teammate, Nicholas is said to have dismissed the notion out of hand.

While the ending was apparently known to Ross, Aboodi, Levin, and a handful of others, the rest of the script—the undoing of Nicholas—remained to be written. Some thought is said to have been given to dispatching him soon after the confrontation on the Toshiba–C. Itoh deal (Aboodi, according to one person, vigorously favored Nicholas's immediate dismissal), but the moment was quickly seen to be wrong (a point about which Levin is said to have felt strongly): coming just after the summer's calamitous publicity, and at a time when the stock price was languishing, a coup would only magnify the public image of a company run amok and, indeed, might jeopardize the Toshiba–C. Itoh transaction itself (which would not be announced until the end of October). In lieu of precipitate action, then, a plot was given time to develop. And Nicholas, being Nicholas, unwittingly played into the hands of what one person referred to as "the Steve forces"—those who were planning his demise.



Nicholas's most self-damaging moment occurred at the Time Warner annual meeting, in late September. For Ross, especially, the meeting was gruelling; he was delivering a carefully prepared defense of the seventy-eight-million-dollar payout he had received, and was doing so against a backdrop of pickets, fired employees, and union spokesmen, all protesting Time Warner layoffs of six hundred and five employees from the magazine division, some of which had been announced just the week before. Into this melee came Nicholas and, in response to a question about further layoffs at the publishing division, he said, in his signature, overtough way, that cost control "must be a way of life for any business that wishes to survive in the global marketplace." Old Warner hands were aghast, feeling that this was a time for palliatives rather than more bitter pills, and knowing that Nicholas's response was one that (however true it was) Ross would deplore; he and Nicholas, standing at their respective lecterns, had never seemed more flagrantly out of synch. And these executives, long accustomed to thinking of annual meetings at Warner as large, celebratory family gatherings, also blamed Nicholas for having robbed them of their party by timing the layoffs so poorly. ("Where's our love-fest?" one demanded, disconsolately.) Actually, the timing was a decision that, according to Nicholas, Levin had made and Nicholas had concurred in; the two had agreed that the announcement of the layoffs, originally set for October 1st, had to be made earlier, so that management could not be accused, later, of having evaded the issue at the annual meeting.

An attempt that Nicholas had made, that July, to find a capital-raising alternative to the strategic alliance was now also transmuted into useful propaganda. He had wanted to create a joint venture combining Warner Music with MCA Music; since Warner Music was much larger, Time Warner, in the capitalization of this entity, would receive three to four billion dollars in cash. According to Nicholas, Ross had

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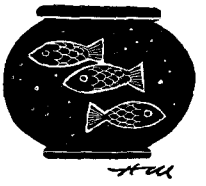
said he liked the idea but had urged that it be kept secret (Levin and Aboodi were the only others in on this discussion) and that someone from outside the company make the approach to Matsushita, MCA's owner. Feelers had been extended, but nothing had come of them. In the fall, however, Robert Morgado, the chairman of Warner Music—a highly political, powerful executive, close to Ross and Aboodi—learned from within the company, he said later, that Nicholas had talked to an investment banker outside about selling the music business. If he had spoken to Nicholas about it, he would presumably have heard that it was a proposed joint venture, not a sale of the music business, and that it was Ross who had urged that it be kept secret. But Morgado says he chose not to dignify the proposition by bringing it up with Nicholas. "I never thought, for a minute, that this company would do something so audaciously stupid," Morgado told me.



Other initiatives that Nicholas undertook, characteristically countercultural in this Warner-dominated company, served to broaden and strengthen the opposition to him. Long known as Nick the Knife for his cost-cutting zeal at Time Inc., Nicholas had been eager to begin scaling back the notoriously luxurious Warner life style, particularly at the corporate level, where the expenses were the most egregious. But his overtures to Ross on this subject, he says, had always been rebuffed. Shortly after Labor Day, however, Nicholas showed Ross the preliminary budget numbers for 1992, and, much to Nicholas's surprise, Ross said, "I think we have to cut," Nicholas recalls. Ross told him that it was important that the cost-cutting be seen as something they were both endorsing, Nicholas says, and that Morgado—who had done cost-cutting at Warner in the early eighties, following a debacle that occurred when the market for Atari video-game systems had all but disappeared—should work on it with Philip Lochner, the former general counsel of Time Inc., who had recently returned to the company after a stint at the S.E.C. As happened with the music-joint-venture idea, nothing was actually done on the cost-cutting, but word was soon travelling through the company that Nicholas intended to cut back drastically on the perquisites that had long been staples of life at Warner, and that he was focussing not only on those at the corporate headquarters but on the divisions as well, and particularly on the Hollywood studio.

During this time, Nicholas also gave some thought to corporate governance—which had lately become the focus of increasingly powerful shareholders'-rights groups—and, as always, he aired his thoughts with Levin. Among other things, he believed that the board, with twenty-four directors, was far too large, and had too many insiders (including Ross and Nicholas, there were nine). By the late fall, according to one Time Warner executive, people like Time Warner's vice-chairman, Martin Payson, who had been Warner's general counsel for two decades, and Time Warner's chief financial officer, Bert Wasserman, thought that Nicholas wanted to remove them from the board and, perhaps, from their jobs.

Wasserman may have felt particularly vulnerable. In October, while Aboodi was in Japan negotiating the Toshiba–C. Itoh deal, it came to the attention of executives at the company that Wasserman had bought Time Warner stock. After an inquiry conducted by Peter Haje, the company's general counsel, who had joined Time Warner from Paul, Weiss, it was determined that Wasserman had committed a careless error in having failed to check with Haje before buying the stock. He was said to be embarrassed and contrite, and there had been no gain. (Indeed, the price of the stock had fallen after his purchase.) Still, it was an unusual lapse for a chief financial officer.

In late November, it was announced that Ross had prostate cancer, and that he would be working from home while undergoing chemotherapy. With his illness—and the discovery that it was apparently a recurrence—came an even greater sense of urgency on the part of Ross loyalists about resolving Nicholas's fate. (One division head, who had expected Nicholas's ouster earlier, said he was "annoyed" when Christmas came and it had not yet been accomplished.) The world according to Nicholas—if he should by this accident of fate achieve the succession that was contractually his—was both easy and, to those loyalists, alarming to envision: costs would be cut and the

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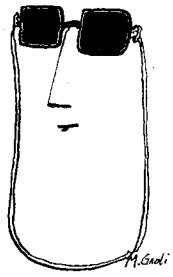
life style radically altered; the Toshiba–C. Itoh deal would be cancelled; assets would be sold to pay down the debt; insiders would be removed from the board; and many of the Warner family would be retired. As for the company's advisers, Aboodi would be dispatched and Liman's role radically reduced, with Cravath getting as much work as Paul, Weiss or, probably, more. This was very likely the first time that the Ross devotees imagined that Nicholas might actually run the company; before this—even before he had the unforgivable temerity to challenge Ross—he had been seen mainly as someone who served at Ross's forbearance.



One former Warner director recalled a meeting held with Liman shortly before the Time-Warner merger, at which he asked Liman what would happen if Ross and Nicholas did not get along as co-C.E.O.s. "Arthur said—dismissively, you know, as though it was almost too obvious to bother answering—'We'll fire him.'"

BY mid-January, the plan was in place. Levin is said to have called Frank Biondi, who had been fired by Nicholas in 1984 and had since become president of Viacom. Levin has remained close to Biondi since their HBO days, and now he reportedly told him, "Just sit tight for a few weeks—something good is about to happen for us all." Around this time, too, Martin Lipton, of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, was hired to represent the company in the Nicholas matter; since Liman would be one of the players in the unseating of Nicholas, he may have felt that if he also acted as counsel to the company in the matter he would be wearing too many hats. And on the evening of January 25th, on an HBO cruise in the Caribbean, Michael Fuchs—who had recently renegotiated his contract with Levin, winning terms that gave him parity with Daly and Semel, of Warner Brothers, and had thus become one of the three highest-paid executives in the company—talked to Dick Munro, urging him to rethink the issue of succession, because Nicholas was the wrong successor. ("Jerry knew that Michael was doing this," one of their colleagues posited. "It was something that Jerry himself couldn't broach with Munro, because he was the beneficiary.") After their discussion, Munro is said to have confided in a friend, "Nick has got himself into a real mess."

As the action began to unfold, on Sunday, February 16th, Nicholas, oblivious, was on a long-scheduled family holiday in Vail, Colorado—a vacation that he had been taking in February every year. Levin paid a three-hour visit to Munro, at his home in Connecticut; Munro is said to have protested later that for the first hour he had no idea what Levin, even more opaque than usual, was talking about. Eventually, though, he got the message. Munro called the former Time director Donald Perkins. He did not call Nicholas. (According to Liman, directors were told that Nicholas hadn't been called—with the implicit directive that they not call him.) And the next morning Munro—although he is said to have known that the matter of Nicholas's resignation would be resolved that week—left for the French Alps, to watch the winter Olympics.

Extraordinary as Munro's virtual evanescence might seem, it was consistent with his past performance that he would make no move to oppose what was already in motion. And, while having Munro's blessing no doubt made things easier for Levin (he is said to have likened it to Jacob's seeking of Isaac's blessing), it was by no means a requisite. Excluding Ross and Levin, and Nicholas (who would not be voting), there were eleven Warner directors to nine Time directors. Nicholas had lost two strong supporters on the board in the past year: David Kearns, who had resigned in the late spring when he became Deputy Secretary of Education, and James Beré, probably Nicholas's staunchest ally, who had died in early January—only days before the plan was set in motion. Furthermore, Michael Dingman, a former Time director, is thought by some close to the situation to have been a Ross loyalist ever since the merger. And while some Time directors other than Dingman might have been sufficiently independent of their origins to vote for Ross, and not Nicholas, on the issue of the strategic alliance, say, it is unimaginable that any Warner director would not have supported Ross.

Liman called some of the Warner directors on Sunday—"to warm us up," as one put it—and then Ross called them. When I asked one of them how Liman had persuaded him that this was the right course, he replied, "It wasn't a call to *persuade*. It was 'This is what Steve wants, and you go along with it.' It was a done deal. And then Steve called, and he said, 'These have been the worst two years of my life. I can't stand it anymore with this guy.' He also said that the Time directors were on board. I found out later that they'd only talked to one, or maybe two, by that time."

While Levin was charged with handling most of the Time side, Ross called Henry Luce III. "Steve talked about the Japanese deal," Luce recalled. "He said Nick delayed the deal by objecting to aspects of it for some weeks, and that jeopardized it. The rest was softer. Stuff about his work habits—and the statement that he never took a phone call after 6 P.M. has to be false. About his not having a constituency—he stayed at his desk, reading position papers, instead of buttering people up, taking them out to dinner. And the criticism that he was bogged down in trivia of corporate governance instead of focussing on strategic policies—in my view, a bum rap."

Donald Perkins, a retired president and chairman who is a member of ten corporate boards and is known as a stickler for governance, flew in from Chicago to see Ross, who was at home and was in one of his active periods between chemotherapy treatments. Beverly Sills, a longtime Warner director, also paid Ross a visit; according to another director, "they wanted Beverly to work over Ed Finkelstein"—a former Time director, and now former chairman and C.E.O. of Macy's—"because she's on his board, too." Those Time directors who were apparently considered the most likely to inform Nicholas of what was afoot—Matina Horner, Jason McManus, and Richard Parsons—were not called until late Wednesday, by which time Nicholas had been told.

Telling Nicholas had not been a sought-after job. Late Tuesday, Levin went to Cravath to inform Sam Butler—who, having known nothing (in contrast to Liman, his theoretical co-outside counsel), was shocked—and also to ask him to call Nicholas in Vail. Butler declined. It was apparently a

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call that neither Ross nor Levin nor Liman wanted to make. Referring to Ross's well-known aversion to confrontation, Liman told me jokingly, "We were afraid for Steve to call—afraid he'd say, 'O.K., I know, it's hurting you and your family, *I'll* resign.' "

In the end, Donald Perkins did it. "Are you sitting down, Nick?" he began. According to Nicholas's wife, Lyn, Perkins' news plunged him into such a state of shock that he was "in no condition to fight." She added, "And there was no time to recover and prepare—the board meeting was the next day, two thousand miles away." Moreover, directors whom he called told him it was over; one director, whom Nicholas considered an ally, counselled him to protect his family by not fighting and by concentrating on his contract.

At the meeting the next day, which was conducted by Martin Payson, there was no discussion of the reasons for Nicholas's termination. Several of the directors participated by telephone, including Munro, from France. Ross, by phone, said little, other than that he expected to be back in the spring; Martin Lipton was said to be at Ross's side, at home, in case anything unforeseen should occur. Aboodi was present, as he usually is at board meetings. ("Since Steve has been sick, especially, some directors wonder, does Aboodi have a tape recorder?" one director commented.) While Aboodi, ostensibly having no authority in the company, obviously could not be involved in helping to carry out this event, he had been deeply involved in its strategy, a Time Warner executive told me. (In an article in the *Times* a few days later, however, Aboodi would be quoted as saying that he was "caught off guard by the timing.") Nicholas, through his lawyer, insisted that the board demand his resignation. ("I wanted it acknowledged that I was being forced out. I didn't want anyone to be able to say that Nicholas deserted his ship," he said later.) It was apparently prudent from a legal standpoint as well. One person involved in the proceedings said that, according to the documents Lipton had prepared, Nicholas would have been tendering his resignation voluntarily, and there might then have been some question about what was due him, according to the terms of the fifteen-year contract he had received at the time of the merger.

However likely Nicholas's demise may have been from the outset, the Time Warner shareholders were now paying dearly for it. Ultimately, he would receive not only a lump-sum payment of $15,750,000 but also a continuation of salary and benefits until 1999, which would prolong the life of his hundreds of thousands of option shares; depending upon the performance of Time Warner stock, those could be worth more than forty-five million dollars.

The only director who did not vote in favor of requesting Nicholas's resignation was Luce, who later said, "I told Steve that I thought it shouldn't be voted on in the board without a general discussion, and that I didn't think phone calls were a substitute for that discussion"; the vote on Levin's promotion to co-C.E.O., however, was unanimous. (Interestingly, no contractual provision was made for Levin to succeed Ross—and while one may argue that that provision had done Nicholas little good, its absence in Levin's case is worth noting.) At the close of the meeting, Perkins, reportedly seeming close to tears, is said to have declared that the next board meeting would have to be devoted to the subject of governance—that management could not continue to keep most directors in the dark, as it had been doing—and added that he had been apprised of the rift between Nicholas and Ross in his conversation with Nicholas in August, but was amazed to learn now that many of his fellow outside directors knew nothing. (The next board meeting, in March, was devoted to the unveiling of the new format for *Time;* no discussion of Nicholas or governance took place.)

During the next few days, Time Warner's press machine, organized by an outside consultant, Gershon Kekst, moved into high gear, successfully presenting the shift as a healthy one for the company. Wall Street agreed: Time Warner stock moved up several points upon the news. Numerous articles portrayed Nicholas as an incompetent and friendless executive, charged by a host of unnamed Time Warner executives with a panoply of wrongs and failings, which ranged from his having cost the company a hundred

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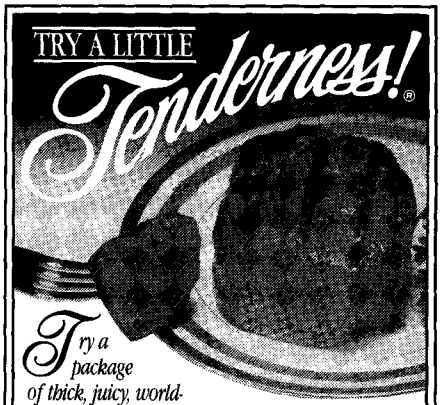

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million to two hundred million dollars by delaying the Toshiba–C. Itoh deal (there is no evidence of this) to his having wanted to sell the music business, and on to his having grown smaller while the job grew larger, and his having been a "bean counter"—in contrast to Levin, who, like Ross, was a "visionary." He was also alleged both to have tried to seize control, "like Alexander Haig," when Ross was taken ill—Nicholas apparently responded to a query about Ross's health from one institutional shareholder by saying, "Jerry and I are running the company"—and not to have taken the helm at that time. According to one person, Levin said that certain directors had been grumbling about Nicholas's failure to assume control. James Beré's name was floated in this regard by several people; Beré, of course, was dead. Nicholas himself is reported to have said over and over to one friend on the night that he learned of his firing, "If the directors thought I should have taken charge more, why didn't anyone tell me? I would have done it. Why didn't Jerry tell me?"

ABOUT a month after the firing, I interviewed Arthur Liman in his office, at Paul, Weiss. Liman has been at Ross's side, as his lawyer and friend, since the mid-seventies. The relationship is, by all accounts, a deep one, and, while it is true that Liman and Paul, Weiss have profited regally from it over the years, it seems to be defined most by the emotional attachment that Liman feels to Ross; the legal role he plays seems to be more in the service of that. He has seen Ross through harrowing crises, which at the time seemed as if they might spell the end of Ross's career—the Atari disaster and, even more ominous, the persistent spectre of indictment (which never came) in the Westchester Premier Theatre scandal—and he has been there for the dazzling comeback. When Ross was courting Time's management in the period leading up to the merger, it was Liman who most compellingly vouched for Ross's integrity and helped to establish the comfort level of Munro, and the Time Inc. outside directors, with Ross and Warner. On a wall of Liman's conference room hangs a framed photograph of Ross, Munro, and Nicholas; on it Munro wrote, "Without you, the Time Warner merger never would have happened," and Nicholas, for his part, added, "You led us through the wilderness."

Liman seemed well satisfied with the process that had led to Nicholas's removal. "I think this was handled with a great deal of sensitivity and grace," he told me. He acknowledged that in its aftermath some directors were unhappy. (Indeed, one Time Warner adviser had told me that many of them were left "with a bad taste in their mouths," and were fearful that now, at a time when outside directors have been assuming increasingly activist roles—exemplified by recent events at both Macy's and General Motors—they, the Time Warner directors, would be criticized as rubber-stamp and retrograde. On a more personal level, Dick Munro was said to be racked with guilt and confusion, wondering aloud whether he had been "used." And, shortly, John Opel, the reserved former chairman of I.B.M., reportedly informed Time Warner that he did not intend to stand for reëlection.) "Directors will always feel they should have more participation," Liman declared. "But once an issue surfaces with directors it becomes political, even Machiavellian. You're inviting lobbying, appeals for support. It's hard for me to imagine how they could have been in at an earlier stage without a sloppier ending."

Liman emphasized repeatedly that this event had been "not about Steve versus Nick but about Nick versus Jerry," and said, "One of the things that were critical from the first moment was that this not be perceived as a Warner takeover—it was just the opposite! Because if Steve got hit by a truck and Nick couldn't make it as C.E.O., then maybe some other candidate would come in, from the Warner side. But this way it *assured* Time succession. That was important to the Time directors."

Levin was indeed indispensable to the execution of Nicholas, if it were to be tastefully done. Only Levin could make it seem not to be the "Warner takeover" that had been predicted from the outset. And only Levin could go as far as to suggest that what had occurred was not about the sovereignty of Ross and not about his own opportunism but about the salvation of Time Inc. Just as he (along with Nicholas and Munro) had wrapped himself in the cloak of the Time Inc. culture before the Delaware court in the summer of 1989, to defend Time Inc.'s rejection of Paramount Communications' bid, so he now donned that versatile garment again.

In the days immediately after Nicholas's firing, Levin, emotional, fervent, referring to his "messianic zeal" for Time Inc. and his desire to speak "from the heart," to give people "the unvarnished Levin," held a series of meetings, from morning to night, with the various magazines' staffs. His message was unmistakable: with Nicholas gone, a new day was dawning in the Time & Life Building.

LEVIN was well aware that the journalists at Time Inc. had been badly dispirited by the merger—had felt that they were working for a diminished product, a relatively peripheral part of the whole, which might well be sold; and the layoffs had only added to the general depression and insecurity. Standing before one after another of these groups, Levin swore that "journalism is at the core of Time Warner," and said that "if there have been problems in the past, now is the time to correct them." He had come to the realization that such a correction (by the excision of Nicholas) was required, he said, during "a walk in the woods" over Christmas. And he was assuming this role, which, he said, was in many ways difficult for him, because of the company's need for "strong symbolic leadership," and "not . . . because I have a large ego—I don't." In a not so oblique reference to the recently departed, Levin declared, "I don't think our orientation should be that layoffs are a way of life." (Levin is also reported to have said in at least one of his talks that he was not sure the layoffs had all been necessary, and so to have prompted a petition organized by Key Martin, of the Newspaper Guild, asking to have some jobs reinstated; he was told that none would be.) Levin reiterated what had been said consistently since the merger; namely, that the magazines would not be sold. And he urged everyone to put aside "concern about political agendas" and to feel "trust . . . respect . . . and, finally, love—in the unconditional sense. *Agape*, I think it's called."

Levin's audiences were generally responsive to this almost evangelical

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appeal, apparently willing, in the hope of redemption, to overlook at least one decidedly discordant note: since the journalists by and large believed that the merger had caused, or dramatically accelerated, the general diminishment of their station—a belief that had led many to vilify Nicholas, and now to celebrate his demise—it was ironic that this person standing before them as their self-proclaimed savior was the same person who, on the Time side, had worked hardest to bring the merger about, was profiting richly from it, and had now arrived at a position that would never have been his if the merger had not occurred.

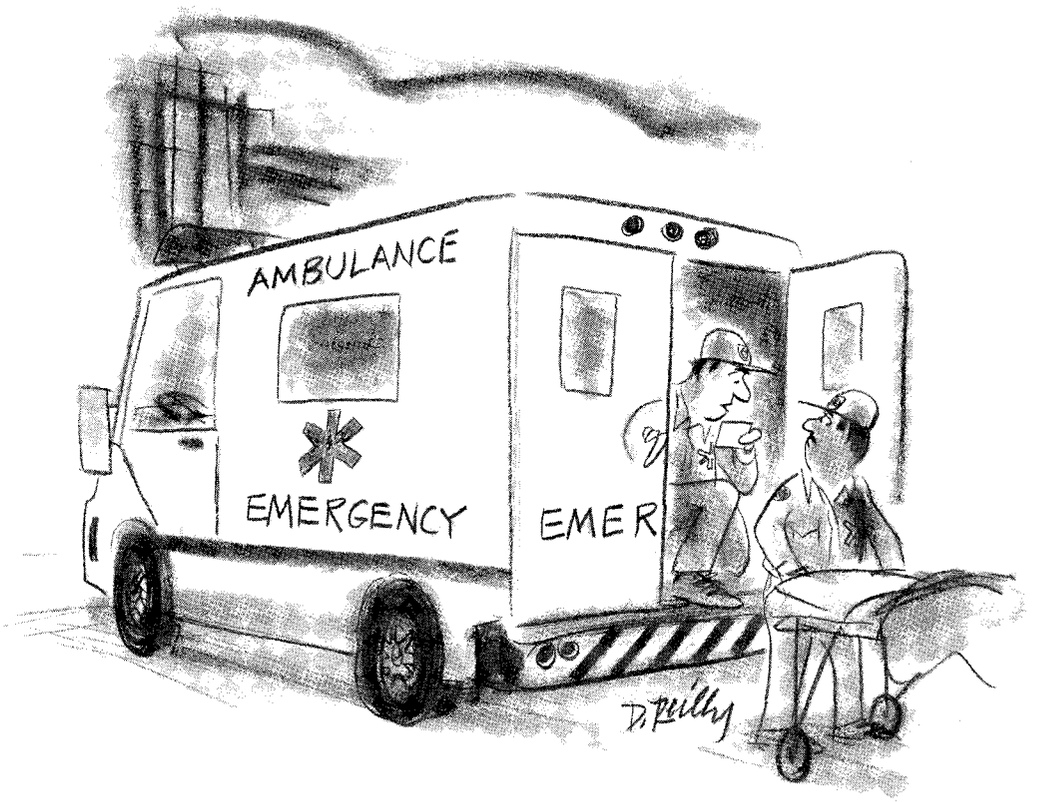
Perhaps Levin's greatest gift—greater, even, than his much-celebrated farsightedness—is his power of persuasion. It is not so much his verbal facility—that can strike listeners as showy and overdone—as the way his words seem, at times, to emanate from some deep inner core of conviction. "There is this force to what Jerry says—in the sense of Luke Skywalker, 'May the force be with you,'" says Tom Kessinger, the president of Haverford College, where Levin is chairman of the Board of Managers. Some friends suggest, however, that the precursor to Levin's ability to persuade others is an equally prodigious capacity for self-persuasion—of the rightness and, often, the moral grounding of whatever position he happens to be taking. A longtime friend and colleague—who, like many others, sees the magazines as the most separable division of Time Warner, the one least related to the entertainment whole, the one that the power brokers in the rest of the company tend to disparage—predicts that in another couple of years Levin will again be addressing employees in the Time & Life Building, declaring with that same messianic zeal that it has finally become clear to him that only by their being spun off will the magazines be enabled, at long last, to achieve their manifest destiny.

Such a scenario is not altogether implausible, since, in the end, the consummate beauty of the part Levin played in the firing of Nicholas was that—much as he wrapped himself in the cloak of Time Inc.—that garb was, essentially, camouflage. For while he said at those meetings with the journalists that he regarded himself as "a Time Warner person," and urged them to do the same, some in the company who know him well wonder whether he has not become so assimilated that he could not be described more aptly now as "a Warner person."

He has, after all, formed his closest relationship at the company today with Aboodi, a walking paradigm of the freewheeling Warner way of life, and he has discarded the institutional mores of Time Inc.—with its notions of corporate governance—like so many outgrown articles of clothing. When the board asked both Levin and Nicholas to reconsider their bonus increases for 1991, Nicholas agreed (he retracted that agreement after he was fired), but Levin is said to have declared—in an expression of entitlement worthy of his most seigneurial Warner colleagues—that he was "offended," and he refused. (He received, as requested, 1.75 million dollars, in addition to his salary and deferred compensation of 1.05 million.) Levin has from the start been keenly solicitous of Ross, making his obeisances with perhaps an even greater eagerness than is shown by his more seasoned Warner colleagues. Indeed, he seems lately like nothing so much as a supplicant asking to join the Warner family. Thus far, his apostasy has served him well. The director Michael Dingman told a friend, "Steve just wanted Jerry in there because he wants someone who will do what he tells him to."

How far Levin's subservience will take him remains to be seen. Ross has just cancelled his return to work, which had been scheduled for mid-July (to be marked with the annual meeting), and has taken a temporary leave of absence to resume cancer treatments. This development has fuelled speculation in some quarters that Aboodi and Liman—the two men closest to Ross, and with the most at stake in a changing of the guard at Time Warner—may have known last winter that Ross's medical prognosis was far more grim than public announcements and Liman's frequent bulletins indicated, and therefore moved expeditiously to supplant Nicholas with their designate, Levin, while directors were still being assured that Ross would soon return.

If he were to return, Ross—his



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hegemony inviolate—would find Levin a more palatable co-C.E.O. than Nicholas ever was; both, after all, are passionate about the entertainment business and have a fondness for what they see as the big picture—Ross, for his part, rhapsodizing about "dreams," and Levin about "the force of ideas." Both pioneers in cable, they rival each other in their excitement about its future; Ross is said to have made about fifteen trips, and Levin perhaps twenty-five, to the Time Warner Cable facility in Queens, which operates the world's first hundred-and-fifty-channel, two-way-interactive cable system. Perhaps the strongest trait they share, however, is resilience; Ross has come back, repeatedly, when he has been counted out (and may yet, again, despite all the doomsayers), and Levin, too, has survived repeated setbacks and failures—only to triumph, ultimately, over his erstwhile partner, ending a rivalry that lasted nearly twenty years.

So now the two survivors are joined. But for the ever more serious question of Ross's illness, there would be no contest; Levin has met someone who is more than his match. One adviser to the company commented, "It is ironic that, having done all this, Jerry now finds himself in the position that Nick was in—waiting for Steve to die." There were some directors and advisers who theorized together after Nicholas's firing that perhaps he welcomed the event—if subconsciously—because he had been trapped, increasingly powerless, in such a daunting endgame. Whatever the benefits of freedom, however, Nicholas deplores the way in which it was granted. "A truly independent board would at least have tried to establish some kind of fact base," he says. "They would not have done something like this without even really knowing why they were doing it. A rushed telephone meeting, with several of the board members out of town, out of the country, or not available, was hardly conducive to a reasoned discussion of the merits."

Nicholas, of course, can be faulted for not having returned from Vail for the meeting, in order to force the directors to confront him. He faults himself particularly for not having continued what he started last August—for not having brought the issue of the Toshiba–C. Itoh deal before the board. Then he would have been not just opposing that deal but advocating his strategy for the company as opposed to Ross's—something that he never did. "If I had lost, I wouldn't have liked it one bit—but at least then it would have been about issues and substance, not ego and power," he says. In the aftermath, Nicholas has puzzled over how he could have been so blind. At Time Inc., after all, he was known for his political acumen. But when he moved from the Time & Life Building to the twenty-ninth floor of Time Warner it was "as though I had arrived on a new planet," he now says. "If you landed on Mars, would your political instincts be relevant? In the culture in which I grew up—with Shepley, Heiskell, Donovan, and Grunwald—it was inconceivable that such a thing could happen."

Levin, of course, came from that culture, too, and that may be why Nicholas never suspected him. Nicholas claims that Levin never appeared to be anything but his ally. He recalls that once, less than a year ago, "Jerry said, quite spontaneously, in the middle of a conversation about something else, 'You know, I have completely accepted you as C.E.O.'" These days, Levin is diligently priming himself for his own hoped-for assumption of that role. In a speech in May before the Time-Life Alumni Society, in which he remarked that giving speeches was difficult for him, and that "for most individuals . . . it's an assertion of ego, which I also find difficult to do," he said he believed it to be vital that a C.E.O. stand for articulated principles, and among his he enumerated his conviction that "management is a humanist art" and his belief in the importance of ideas, and of morality and integrity (which, he said, Munro had stood for and he now would). And, in an aside, Levin, expressing his perennial bewilderment at finding himself somehow in ever higher and more powerful positions, added, "I've been somewhat of a student of the way corporations are run, and I never *dreamed* I would be an active participant." —Connie Bruck

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To create the fantastic interior of Le Bar Bat, a club restaurant in a former church, the architects drew inspiration from an opera production by Franco Zeffirelli. The idea was to suggest a Western building taken over by an Asian culture, then abandoned and inhabited by bats.—*Architectural Record Lighting.*

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THE THEATRE

L'Auteur dans le Connecticut

PETER PARNELL'S "Flaubert's Latest," at Playwrights Horizons, hovers somewhere between being clever in the American sense (sharp and witty) and clever in the British sense (silly and smart-ass). Its hero is a blocked writer (oh, God!) named Felix, who lives in Connecticut; he's obsessed with Flaubert, and wants to complete Flaubert's unfinished "Bouvard and Pécuchet." Felix's doctor's wife, who is in rehearsal as Mme. Arcati in an amateur production of "Blithe Spirit," obligingly summons up Flaubert from some vasty deep, along with his lively mistress and muse, the poet Louise Colet. At the entrance of these two, in the dynamic persons of John Bedford Lloyd and Jean DeBaer, everything snaps into life. Their delight in our present and its appurtenances—he is particularly taken with the word processor and the Cuisinart, and she with a Bergdorf dress and a pair of shoes from a nearby mall, to say nothing of an atmosphere that encourages female assertiveness—almost makes up for the tiresome literary jokes and the rat-a-tat-tat of dropped names which precede their arrival, and also for the who-cares troubles of Felix's lover, a dancer named Colin (Mitchell Anderson), who strikes poses before our eyes and carries on a flirtation with the gardener. Many of the better lines are borrowed from the Master himself. (It isn't often that for the price of a theatre ticket an audience is treated to Flaubert.) There isn't much in the way of action, but there is little need for it, with the flamboyant Mr. Bedford Lloyd and Miss DeBaer at hand.

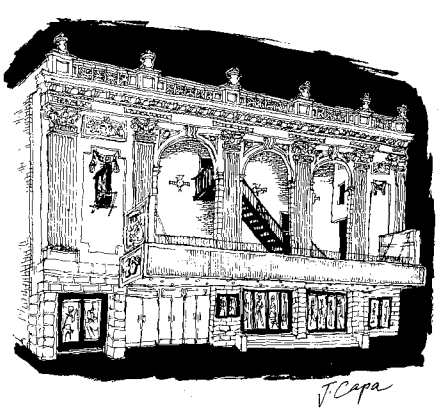
"Flaubert's Latest" may be foolish from time to time, but the eye, at least, is pampered from beginning to end by James Noone's lovely setting, of a Connecticut garden in full flower (the summer sunlight is courtesy of Kenneth Posner), and by Jane Greenwood's dresses, pretty and alluring enough to stop the heart. The acting, across the board, is satisfactory and more. I especially enjoyed Mary Louise Wilson, as the doctor's wife; Mark Nelson, as Felix; and Leila Fazel, as a conjured-up belly dancer. David Saint directed.

—EDITH OLIVER

Not for Profit

OSCAR WILDE, John Lahr reminds us, thought that "Salomé" was his best play: he thought it enlarged the artistic horizon of its time. If you want your artistic horizon enlarged—or, at any rate, altered—you should head over to the Circle in the Square, where Ted Mann seems to be having a little fun with his board members by reviving this camp classic in a production that stars Al Pacino as Herod, Suzanne Bertish as Herodias, and, in the title role, Sheryl Lee, the young lady whose performance as Laura Palmer—the murdered teen-ager in "Twin Peaks"—caused such a calm. At least, one assumes that Ted Mann is being jocular. The production, which has been conceived as a benefit for Circle in the Square—it's running in rotation with "Chinese Coffee," a new two-character play by Ira Lewis, which features Mr. Pacino and Charles Cioffi—is good fun up to a point, as any production of "Salomé" would be that begins with the Cappadocian blowing the Second Soldier and ends with Salomé doing unspeakable things with the head of the prophet Jokanaan. You're shielding your eyes, and fighting off the impulse to laugh whenever one of the half-naked men onstage opens his mouth (here no one talks in a normal accent or tone of voice: the director, Robert Allan Ackerman, has seen to that), but you're having a good time, all the same.

Unfortunately, the presence of Mr. Pacino adds a kind of seriousness to the proceedings, and I mean that in the friendliest possible way. When he launches into his light-in-the-loafers Herod, you find yourself caring about how he's getting along. You care that the particular shtick he's doing wears out its welcome after about five minutes, and that the incessant monotony of his inflection, with its *em*phasis on *e*very *word* or *some*times every *o*ther word, but always on the already important word and the already accented syllable ("I have a *col*lar of *pearls*, *set* in *four rows*. They are like unto *moons chained* with *rays* of *sil*ver"), begins to seem less like artistic choice than like artistic limitation. You can't help noticing that Pacino's Herod isn't that different from his Mark Antony. Most of all, you mind that this charming and generous performer has allowed himself to be seduced into this sort of self-servingness and self-indulgence—what other explanation can there be for a staging that keeps Salomé's back to the audience throughout the scene in which Herod makes his pitch to her, so that we can't see what effect his words are having?



Well, I suppose one other explanation might be Miss Lee, whose view of acting seems bounded, on the one hand, by the concept of the reaction shot (shaping her mouth into an emblematic O of wonderment or surprise) and, on the other, by a roaring whisper that is clearly meant to lace emotion with a touch of classicism. As for Miss Bertish—the divine Miss Bertish, who played Fanny Squeers (and countless other roles) in "Nicholas Nickleby"—she spends the evening sporting an unfortunate headdress and splaying her legs in a camp approximation of female licentiousness, and seems to be auditioning for a spot on "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

And what of Miss Lee's dance, the evening's pièce de résistance? Conceived by Lar Lubovitch, it draws on a variety of sources: there's a little Duncan, a little Graham, a little Robbins (Tim, not Jerome), a little Gene Kelly and Agnes de Mille, a little Lamaze, a little Joe Cocker, a little Eulalie Shinn (remember the mayor's wife in "The Music Man"?), a little of Jane Fonda's Lower Body Solution, and a whole lot of Robin Byrd—all deeply felt, I'm sure, and all dutifully executed by Miss Lee. It's a case of too much, too late.

—MIMI KRAMER

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DANCING

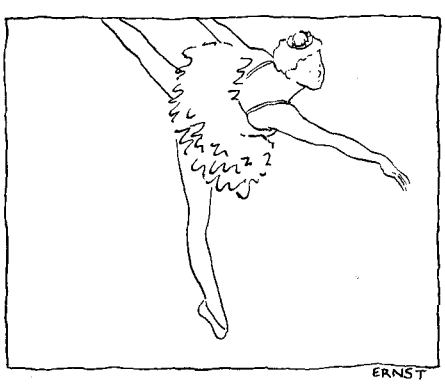
The View from the Bridge

THE heartbeat of ballet has always been found in major international cities of politics, culture, commerce, and fashion—Paris, London, Vienna, Milan, St. Petersburg, New York, in various historical eras. And the definitive choreographic shapers of classical ballet have come to these cities from abroad. The French style was achieved by Italians, the Russian style by the Frenchman Marius Petipa, the American style by the Russian-born George Balanchine. But ballet is also a provincial art. It exists in scores of lesser cities, where it is molded by resident choreographers who react to what is going on in the great ballet companies elsewhere.

Copenhagen is not one of the metropolitan hubs of world culture, and the choreographer August Bournonville, who established the Danish style in ballet, was a local: born in Denmark, worked in Denmark, died in Denmark. He was a traveller, and was keenly aware of trends in the ballet of other countries—especially in Paris, where he had received invaluable technical training in his late teens and early twenties. He later worked in Stockholm and Vienna. But it is his work in Denmark that matters to us. Devotedly, he crafted for his compatriots a schooling and repertory that in the last forty years have gained classic status. Several Bournonville ballets and dances are performed by companies all over the world. When the Royal Danish Ballet tours abroad—it recently visited America for two weeks (though not New York)—it is principally the Bournonville ballets that audiences want to see. The company can assemble a week-long festival in Copenhagen of almost all his surviving choreography—as it did in 1979 and again this spring, and as it plans to do in 2005—and critics and fans arrive in droves from far and wide to take the Bournonville waters. Bournonville is internationally beloved now. What he established at home in Denmark has made him the greatest of all provincial choreographers.

The excuse for this year's festival was to celebrate the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of his three-act "Napoli." In Bournonville, you dance for joy—other emotions are conveyed by mime—and for that reason "Napoli," which ends with a long, mounting dance expression of love triumphant and jubilant community, is his most characteristic work. A new staging of this famous three-acter was given. The producers, Dinna Bjørn, Henning Kronstam, and Frank Andersen, made serious efforts to convey some of Bournonville's original intentions, especially in the second act. But the pleasure of this "Napoli" was the same as the last one (seen on the Danes' 1988 American tour) and, doubtless, every one before that. The Danes still take pains to tell you the ballet's story in detail, to fill its dances with zest, and to make its stage world as real as possible. Act I is a pulsating tapestry of mime, Act III a bright cornucopia of dance. And at the back of the stage for Act III there is still a bridge—thronged at every performance by children, who watch intently, clap the tarantella, try to catch the hero's hat when he throws it away into the air, descend to thread their way through the final ensemble Galop, and return to their post, where they wave as the curtain falls.

The kids on the "Napoli" bridge have always been played by young students from the Royal Danish Ballet. Bournonville provided several opportunities for children in his ballets—in "Konservatoriet," they play their eighteen-twenties Parisian predecessors, young ballet students joining in a Vestris ballet class—but it is in "Napoli" that their presence counts for most. And from the bridge they look down onto the dance world they hope to inherit. What a wonderfully exuberant and touching world it is—but will it be large enough to keep them absorbed? Look at old photographs of the bridge, and you see little Erik Bruhn, little Peter Martins. No Dane wants to dance or watch only Bournonville fare. Bournonville's original Sylph, Lucile Grahn, was the first of those who were trained into stardom and then left. Since then the émigrés have included Bruhn, Martins, Adeline Genée, Peter Schaufuss, Ib Andersen, and many more. Next year, the company presents eleven ballets by Balanchine (who held Bournonville's job for a year or so in 1930-31, and who later used to watch every performance of New York City Ballet's "Bournonville Divertissements" with professional admiration). That will help to stimulate the Danes in Copenhagen. Meanwhile, the company's newest male star, Nicolaj Hübbe, following the lead of Martins and Andersen, will have moved to New York. He joins City Ballet on July 1st.



Bournonville knew that Copenhagen was not the center of the world. Most of his extant ballets concern the various exotic lures that tempt a man to forsake home life, and all of them concern the value of home and hearth. In "La Sylphide" (1836), the Scots farmer James leaves his fiancée, Effy, and pursues the ethereal Sylph into her sylvan realm; in trying to possess the unattainable, he becomes responsible for the Sylph's death and meanwhile loses Effy to a rival suitor. In "Napoli," the hero, Gennaro, rescues the heroine, Teresina, from the Blue Grotto, reclaiming her from the seduction of the aqueous world into which she has fallen, and brings her home to Naples. The three brothers in "The Kermesse at Bruges" (1851) are given magic gifts, which change their life styles but which they have to give up to retain what they hold most dear. In "A Folk Tale" (1854), Hilda, a changeling brought up among trolls, makes her way back to the manor where she was born and belongs; her counterpart, the malicious and sensual troll Birthe, finds herself, to her frustration and bewilderment, alien even to the manor folk among whom she has grown up; and the hero, Junker Ove, has to escape home (Birthe) in order to find it again (Hilda). Vilhelm, the young Lieutenant in "Far from Denmark" (1860), is attracted by the Latin beauty Rosita, but finally

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remembers his Danish fiancée, to whom he will return. And in "The King's Volunteers on Amager" (1871) Edouard, a married man given to philandering, apologizes to his wife when she confronts him with his flirtations, and returns to her side.

In all these ballets you can feel Bournonville's focus moving away from escapism and closer to Copenhagen. Unlike the grove of "La Sylphide," the Blue Grotto of "Napoli" is a real and specific place. At the end of the first scene of "Kermesse," the three brothers bid goodbye to their sweethearts and set off as if to seek their fortunes, but their travels don't take them out of Bruges. The sailors in "Far from Denmark" are Danes who will sail back home from South America. As for "The King's Volunteers," geographically Amager is to Copenhagen as Brooklyn is to New York; and the real Edouard had been a friend of Bournonville's father. Though Bournonville was by no means the first choreographer to make middle- and working-class people the heroes of his ballets, no other choreographer so celebrated the social fabric of ordinary lives. Domestic existence became as crucial to him as to Ibsen. There are connections, by the way. In his memoirs, Bournonville talks of the Copenhagen stagings of two early Ibsen plays; and within a week of the choreographer's death Copenhagen's Royal Theatre presented the world première of "A Doll's House." The heroine, Nora—who dances a tarantella—was created by the actress Betty Schnell, whose first stage career had been as a Bournonville dancer.

Whereas in "A Doll's House" the tarantella helps Nora to discover new aspects of herself, and so leads toward her emancipation from home and husband, the tarantella in "Napoli"—based on Bournonville's observations in Italy in 1841—is the expression of a community and demonstrates the vitality that binds these folk together. "Napoli" was created toward the end of what has often been called the golden age of Danish art; and, as various exhibitions around Copenhagen this spring showed, Bournonville was just one of numerous Danish artists who visited Italy and let it enrich their work. To him Naples meant many things: above all, verismo, and a way of life where both gesture and dance were vividly natural. But the more Danish he grew, the less he was able to find such perfect locations for effusions of both dance and mime. Not only is Act III of "Napoli" like no one else's choreography; it's like nothing else in Bournonville. His repertory contains only two other major suites in which classical dance builds and develops. One is the "other" world of "La Sylphide," which is the kind of Romantic escapism that he came to avoid; and the second is "Konservatoriet," where dancing is depicted in a classroom—not something he could repeat or imitate. Elsewhere, although there are brilliant divertissements and isolated dances, ballet is just one ingredient; it is accorded no preferential treatment. Mime, in all its richness, is really the core of the Bournonville ballets.

And music. These works would not have such longevity had their maker not been assisted by a remarkable generation of Danish composers. The names Herman Løvenskjold, Holger Simon Paulli, Edvard Helsted, Niels W. Gade, J. P. E. Hartmann, and Hans Christian Lumbye may not rank high among nineteenth-century composers, but among ballet composers they should rank higher than they do. Their ballet scores—often richer and more appealing than Adam's sometimes plodding score for "Giselle"—are tuneful, mobile, and full of rhythmic variety. You can hear how much they learned from the more eminent European musicians of their day. Gade was deeply influenced by Mendelssohn; Lumbye is justly known as the Strauss of the North. Weber, Donizetti, and Liszt can be heard here and there; some of the scores seem to anticipate Wagner and Delibes.

Above all, you hear in these ballets the influence of Rossini; and in this Rossini anniversary year the Bournonville festival was a happy event to attend. Bournonville choreographed several items to Rossini music, and the scores of "Napoli" and "The Kermesse at Bruges" quote numbers from "The Barber of Seville" and "Count Ory." Through all Rossini's music runs the rhythmic current of a new dance age. This is instep music, written in an era when dancers in the ballroom and onstage were rising higher onto their toes than ever before. As a student in Paris in the eighteen-twenties, Bournonville knew Rossini and attended his Paris productions. It was surely he who pushed the Danish composers to quote or copy the great Italian composer. And he knew how to draw the most from these men. The score he commissioned for his "La Sylphide" from Løvenskjold is good enough to be listened to by itself—whereas when you hear the Schneitzhoeffer score for the original "La Sylphide" (1832) you realize that if Marie Taglioni had the crowning triumph of her career to this clunking accompaniment she really must have been a genius.

Still, though listening to Bournonville's music is one of the most under-

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rated pleasures in dance, watching what he makes of it redoubles and quadruples that pleasure. ("The idea of dancing is inseparable from music" is how his autobiography opens.) The most intoxicating moment in "Kermesse" occurs when Carelis is alone with his sweetheart, Eleonora. He has been given a magic fiddle that makes all who hear it dance; and now he plays it. At first, she dances wistfully, hoping that he will stop; but then she surrenders herself to it, Paulli's score expands in a surge of melody, and she bounds joyfully to and fro across the stage, sailing on her lover's music. From music Bournonville draws plenitude and surprise. You never know where his dancers will move next, because sideways or even backward is as natural to Bournonville as forward. One of his most characteristic jumps for a man is the turning jeté in attitude, in which the dancer begins by jumping upstage, pivots in midair, and suddenly opens to address the audience before landing. In the Sylph's most bewitching step, she travels away from the ardent James through the air, only to arrive facing him and with one leg suddenly pointing in his direction. These are just isolated steps, and Bournonville is a master of phrases—long and packed phrases, with unpredictable effects of timing. One jump will take off on the downbeat, another will land on it, and another will hit it in midair.

Bournonville's musicality is his least imitable quality. In recent years, two lost full-length ballets—"Abdallah" and "The Lay of Thrym"—have been reconstructed. Both add to our idea of the choreographer without adding much to our pleasure in him. The dances of "Abdallah," as New York saw four years ago, are fitted too tamely to their music. "The Lay of Thrym," reconstructed in 1990 by the late Allan Fridericia and Elsa Marianne von Rosen, shows a forgotten side of Bournonville—the maker of Nordic mythological ballets. Three long "Thrym" scenes were shown at the festival's closing gala; critics were able to watch a video of the whole thing. In either form, it proved a crashing bore. The big mystery is the music. The composer is Hartmann, who does so much to create "A Folk Tale," but the "Thrym" score, for all its elegance and sophistication, never once sounds theatrical. That may not be Hartmann's fault. Since "The Lay of Thrym" stayed in Danish repertory for over forty years, its music must have sustained it theatrically. But without Bournonville's shaping hand the ballet is as dull to hear as it is baffling to follow. The long and complex scenario covers roughly the same ground as Wagner's "Rheingold" in not a lot less time; a headache for modern audiences, it tells of Thor, Loke, Freja, Frejr, Vola, Gerda, and Sigyn, and (not least) of the loss of Thor's hammer and the gods' efforts to regain it. "Thrym" should be subtitled "If I Had a Hammer."

In Act II of the new "Napoli," Dinna Bjørn has restored all the original score, which includes an attractively Donizettian cello melody, to accompany the pas de deux for the heroine, Teresina, and the god of the grotto, Golfo. This is the centerpiece of Bjørn's conception of the act; she means to bring out an erotic element in Golfo's courtship that has been neglected. Golfo, a mime role, is strongly played by either the senior Arne Villumsen or the young principal Peter Bo Bendixen. But Bjørn is no choreographer. She can tell the Act II story adequately, but her dances look both thin and cluttered; and hapless costuming (especially for the Tritons) makes her efforts look foolish. Still, that act was never a big deal in "Napoli," and Bjørn's version doesn't trash Bournonville's spirit. In Act III she and Henning Kronstam have actually improved narrative details that lead up to the great dance conclusion.

Much more troubling was the new production of "A Folk Tale." The most original character in this ballet is Birthe. Surely modelled on Bertalda, the confused and vixenish changeling in De La Motte Fouqué's "Undine," Birthe seems also an antecedent of Ibsen's Nora and Strindberg's Miss Julie. Lis Jeppesen—a shimmering orphan Hilda in the last staging—now plays Birthe as a forceful, busy, bright-eyed hoyden, with a tangle of red curls and an exaggerated way of marching on her heels. Several details of the character come into new focus. This untamed shrew admires the peasants' dance and berates her fiancé, Ove, when he won't dance with her. His mooning romanticism enrages her, and she flaunts herself before him. But the emphasis is cartoonlike, and we never sense any of Birthe's bewilderment or her pangs. Everything about the new production subtly condescends, as if to say "This story is really only for kids." The last production—a triumph in the 1979 Bournonville festival and on the Danes' 1980 and 1982 American tours—was flawed only by its flimsy scenery. This staging has the news value of designs by the Queen of Denmark, an assiduous Bournonville balletomane with experience as an illustrator of children's books. There are gains—a hill in Act I that opens splendidly to reveal the caverns below, some costumes of exquisite color and cut in Act III—but the underground troll realm of Act II is reduced to the status of a harmlessly lurid musical-comedy depiction of sub-Tolkien Dwarves, Orcs, and Ents. Ove and Hilda have shrunk to two-dimensional stature, and the trolls are merely absurd.

Jeppesen has been the world's foremost Bournonville ballerina since 1979. Watching her in several roles this year was to see the plight of Bournonville today. In "Kermesse," she makes the sturdy, hot-tempered Marchen a crude caricature, and "Konservatoriet" shows that she has lost plenty of both ballon and elevation. And yet her dancing exists so fully within her music that she can still enchant. As Teresina in "Napoli" (as in other roles), Heidi Ryom has sharper technique and is never for a moment unstylish, but Jeppesen, even on one of her more technically off-form nights, becomes the ballet's very soul. She fills every phrase with Teresina's ardor, her fun, her devotion. The only female dancer who has a comparable way of filling a dance phrase to its music's brim is her contemporary Mette-Ida Kirk, who, recovering from a severe injury, was not seen until the festival's closing night and then on the American tour. The company has a crop of good-girl young women who treat Bournonville with careful respect but without surrendering themselves to his drama or rhythm. The pale-blond Rose Gad was a genteelly bland Sylph. Silja Schandorff, who looks strikingly like a baby Suzanne Farrell above the waist, dances

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on a bold scale but with little variety of light or shade. When the Bolshoi's Nina Ananiashvili danced the "Flower Festival in Genzano" pas de deux on the closing gala, she showed what these and other rising female dancers lack: the brio that should swell Bournonville's phrases like helium.

For many spectators the festival's star was the elegant blond Nicolaj Hübbe, who played James in "La Sylphide," Gennaro to Jeppesen's Teresina, the leading male dancer of "Konservatoriet," and more. His presence has gained a new sexual force since the company's 1988 American tour, and his dancing has greater scale and urgency. As a star he is wide awake. As a dance artist he is no model either of detailed involvement or of taut rhythm—except in the gala "Flower Festival," whose dances he packed with soaring musical verve (and thrillingly exact double air turns to both right and left). Injury kept his contemporary Alexander Kølpin, who has shared leading roles with him, offstage this spring. Arne Villumsen, the great James and Gennaro of the previous generation, has gained a lot of weight even since '88, and as Edouard in "The King's Volunteers" he lacked the edge needed to carry off the lively social dancing. But everything he does has power and grave integrity. Lloyd Riggins, a skinny young American dancer who has been with the company for five years, is scaling the leading roles with impressive attack and precision. Johan Kobborg, a nineteen-year-old, brought to the "Flower Festival" pas de deux, to Carelis in "Kermesse," and to numerous supporting roles the most surging and devout Bournonville male dancing since the Villumsen-Andersen generation. Only a slight tendency to little-boy prettiness of manner mars his performing, and his happy, eager spirit colored the whole festival. You looked forward to his every appearance.

The company has regained much of its command of Bournonville technique, and these juniors never vulgarize Bournonville. But some senior artists are cheapening the mime roles they've inherited. In "Kermesse," the seasoned Flemming Ryberg plays the fussy, puzzled butler who must observe his glamorous mistress playing Titania to the Bottom of simple Geert. It's a little gem of a role, but Ryberg, stiff, overly made-up, and indifferent to the goings on, played it as if mummified—a joke at the expense of the ballet, like Jeppesen's Marchen. There are other bad-news stories; in "Kermesse," Villumsen was the only improvement on previous casts. Bournonville's lesser-known ballets are in danger of turning into two-dimensional romps.

The first season you see the Danes dance Bournonville is always the best. But watching the changes of generation within the company retains its fascination; there are still experienced Danes who find fulfillment in giving these ballets life. Eva Kloborg, the Teresina of '79, now plays that character's mother, Veronica, with tender dignity. Niels Bjørn Larsen, seventy-eight and a former director of the company, made a gala appearance as the Street Singer in Act I—scruffy and ideally mannered in his miming of can belto. A 1977 video of "A Folk Tale" shows Sorella Englund to have been a beautiful Hilda—a calm, spacious, and authoritative dancer, imbued with that character's entire nervous system. She now plays the diffident troll Viderik as a woeful Petrushka figure; she works too hard for sympathy, but, even when misguided, as here, she is always an arresting stage artist. Her Madge—febrile, acid, smitten with James—is the definitive account for today. To watch a '69 video of "Napoli" with Niels Kehlet's ebullient, desperate Gennaro and the fiery, vital Teresina of Kirsten Simone was a treat. I wouldn't forgo the scheming, mean Peppo that Kehlet plays in "Napoli" today, however. As for Simone, who danced leading roles in the company's first important international tours, in the fifties, she has now played almost every female role in Bournonville. Yet she may never have been better than she is now. In performances of "La Sylphide" on the American tour, she alternated between Madge, whom she plays as a funny, toothless, rapacious old crone, and the croftswoman Anna, to whom she gives a warmheartedness and a supply of quietly telling detail that add new poignancy to every episode. A Bournonville ballet is as large as you make it.

—Alastair Macaulay

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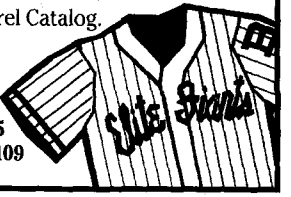

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IN FASHION

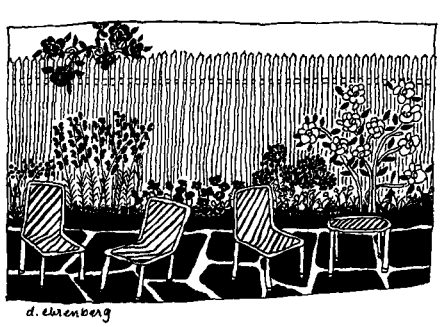
The Religion of Woman

AMONG the people who work in the fashion business, it is almost unanimously assumed that skirts will soon be getting longer, if only because they've been short for quite a while now and people—particularly the ones who work in the fashion business—are ready for a change. "Short looks so démodé and Out," Karl Lagerfeld declared on the front page of *Women's Wear Daily* in March, at the start of the fall ready-to-wear shows. The fashion press seems to have appointed Lagerfeld its new oracle, and he obliges to the hilt, handing down pronouncements as if the cure for what ails fashion were a few sweeping statements from a designer with strong convictions. In Milan, the first stop on the four-city semiannual circuit, the small talk between shows revolved around hemlines and their impending drop: the eventual consensus was that skirts, if they came down, would fall precipitously, to mid-calf or lower, instead of inching their way kneeward. But what seemed to me more interesting than the details of the discussion was the fact that it was happening at all. This season, for the first time in ages, the people in the business seemed to assume that there would be some sort of agreement reached on hemlines—if not this time around, then the next—and that women would follow the designers' lead. For those of us cursed with a long memory, the tone of this debate was reminiscent of the way things used to be, before women gained what was regarded on both sides as the upper hand.

Probably no other issue in fashion is as charged with feminist rancor as the question of hemlines, which during the early seventies came to stand for women's craven subjugation to a cartel of designers—who, for convenience' sake, were depicted as exclusively male and of one mind. The idea of women rushing, lemming-like, in search of a dress in the latest color, or raising or lowering their skirts to the most recent requisite length, now seemed downright ridiculous. What could they have been *thinking* all those years? Clearly, feminists concluded, they hadn't been thinking at all. Or else they'd been playing along with their oppressors until the moment was right for revolt. When, in 1970, having finally chopped off their wardrobes to the mini level, women refused to adopt the new midiskirt that designers were proposing, their uprising was hailed as a great and decisive victory.

Designers kept right on presenting their collections as if they mattered. The press, which had portrayed itself as the messenger of the gods until all of a sudden women started taking potshots at the messenger, recast itself in the role of go-between. Fashion magazines continued to dispense advice, but they changed their tone from breathless to reasonable, justifying the most expensive items as "investments," and, in an effort to demonstrate their solidarity with the women who were their readers, advocating comfort and "ease." The clothes that designers paraded on the runways were now characterized as mere suggestions, meant to help women as they got on with their busy lives. As for hemlines, they drifted downward at first and then, in the early eighties, settled somewhere in the neighborhood of the knee until a few years ago, when the miniskirt made a comeback, swept in on a tide of sixties nostalgia. But even then the fashion press refrained from announcing the fact, except to remark that if miniskirts were once again ubiquitous it must be because women wanted them, not because designers had decreed them.

As I listened to all the talk about hemlines this season, I kept thinking that surely women were past the point of being dictated to, and I said so one morning in Milan to the woman on my left, an executive from a large American department store. "You're wrong about that," she told me, and went on to explain that the women who are her customers—intelligent women, she added, accustomed to thinking for themselves—are again looking to designers and fashion magazines for guidance. The logic, as she explained it, is along the same lines as the reasoning behind what has lately been called the backlash against feminism: instead of allowing women to relax and worry less about their clothes, all the recent freedom in fashion has brought on a case of anxiety. The choices are overwhelming. After two decades of unprecedented free reign, she said, women once again want to be told what to wear.



The discussion surrounding the fall collections did include a few dissenting voices, declaring that women ought to be able to wear whatever skirt length they pleased—which ten years ago would have gone without saying. But for the most part the people in the fashion business, including many designers, seem to feel that the balance of power has finally shifted back in their favor. This perception may be based more on the current emotional climate and a strong dose of wishful thinking than on statistics: retail sales are still dismal (blame the economy), and fashion-magazine circulation is still flat (although insiders take heart at the scramble that has *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* rushing to buy up editors and photographers, now that Liz Tilberis, the former editor-in-chief of British *Vogue*, has been brought in to head the *Bazaar*).

There is, one senses after running for a few seasons with the fashion pack, a palpable longing to get back to the way things were in the fifties, when fashion was at the height of its power, when women gave it their allegiance and took the sort of passionate interest in clothes that these days is found only among professionals. Many of the people who work in fashion now are too young to have been working in it then, but in their conversation and in their minds they often find themselves referring to those better days, as if the fifties were the norm rather than an aberration brought on by a unique set of circumstances. Two great designers, Christian Dior and Balenciaga, ruled. Two great photographers, Avedon and Penn, articulated the glamour of the era. The success of Dior's New Look, launched in 1947, had brought women back to the stores in droves, as they hurried to

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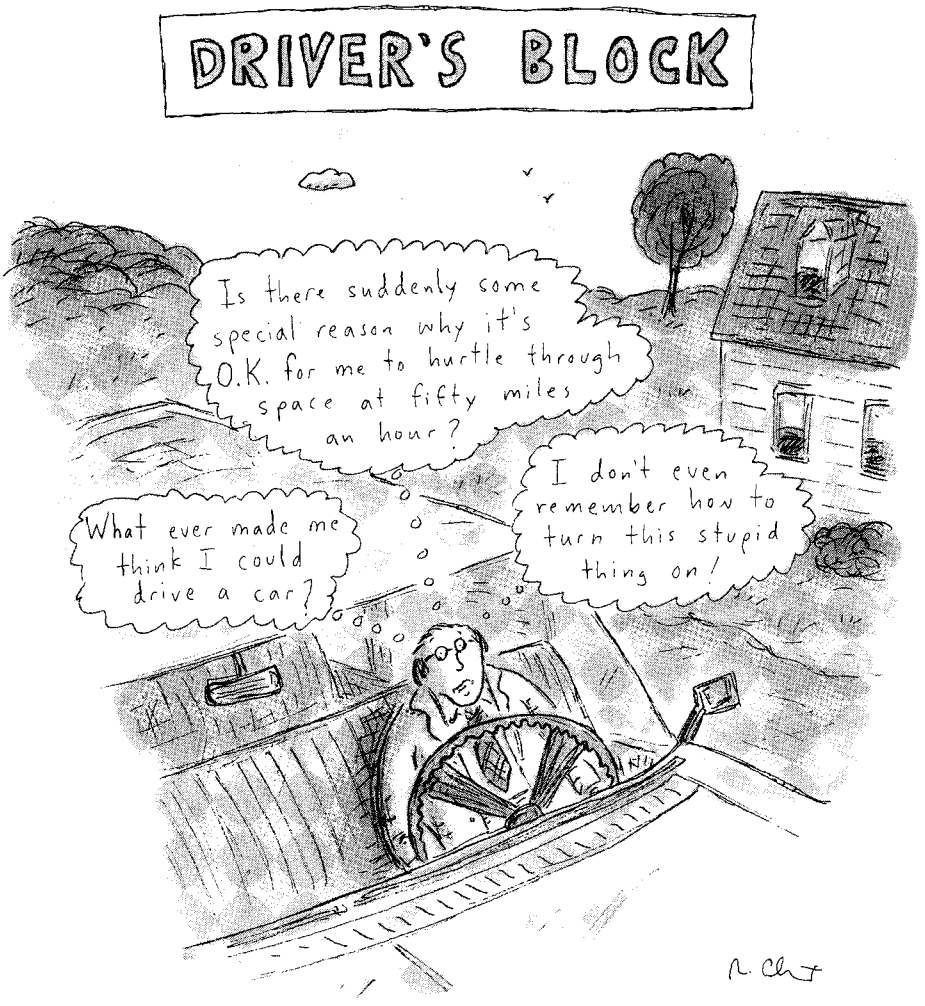
put difficult times behind them, abandoning their skimpy wartime suits, made in compliance with the fabric rations, for voluminous skirts and all the trappings of the new silhouette. Retailers then set out to induce the same sort of shopping frenzy on a regular basis. The public-relations and advertising machinery was cranked up and began issuing seasonal pronouncements, which were taken to heart by a whole generation of women who had come of age in the Depression and, in many cases, had never had a store-bought dress. Shopping became their recreation. Women embraced fashion as they embraced the future, for the hope it offered. The future hasn't looked so promising since.


DRIVER'S BLOCK
Is there suddenly some special reason why it's O.K. for me to hurtle through space at fifty miles an hour?
What ever made me think I could drive a car?
I don't even remember how to turn this stupid thing on!

• • •

THAT feminism, one of the chief preoccupations of the nineteen-seventies, should be on the wane in fashion at this moment is particularly ironic given the clothes that designers showed for fall, which often looked like the seventies reincarnate. Seventies nostalgia was probably inevitable, and it arrived right on schedule, just as the sixties revival was running out of steam. Menswear—for women—made a comeback, looking quite dandified: a chalk-striped jacket and matching vest worn with leggings, at Ralph Lauren; pleated flannel trousers worn with crisp white shirt collars, and neckties tucked into black long-line bras, at Dolce & Gabbana; jackets made from panels of pin-striped flannel sewn into geometric patterns, at Christian Francis Roth; a Prince of Wales plaid vest with bra cups built in, at Byron Lars. The tuxedo, calling to mind Yves Saint Laurent's seventies variations on *le smoking*, made a stronger showing than it has in years. There were handkerchief skirts, a late-hippie favorite, and black leather bell-bottoms, at Perry Ellis. Vivienne Westwood and Karl Lagerfeld have been relentlessly promoting platform shoes, which were standard in the early seventies, for some time now; this season, there were platforms in other designers' collections as well. The Wild West has returned, with prairie skirts and fringed suède jackets and cowboy boots. Jeans are the uniform, as they were in the seventies, for day and evening: in white leather, at Versace; in quilted pink velvet, at Dior; in denim printed with a gigantic photo of Marlene Dietrich's face, at Westwood. Ellis Flyte and Richard Ostell, two English designers working in tandem, had a sudden success with a collection of clothes that owe a lot to Zoran, the high priest of seventies minimalism. The midiskirt, which, after women's initial rejection of it, took hold and held sway for most of the seventies, was everywhere. Even Joni Mitchell and Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass came in for revival on fashion-show soundtracks this season.

With the return of the seventies, fashion comes full circle. Some twenty years ago, when designers first went retro on us, it was the thirties they were resurrecting; now it's the thirties as seen through the eyes of the seventies—twice removed. By the end of the seventies, we had worked our way into the forties, with shoulder pads and aggressive-looking suits. Then, in the mid-eighties, with Christian Lacroix's pouf-skirted party dresses, came the return to the New Look of the fifties—tight, strapless bodices and bouffant skirts. After that, fashion moved on to the sixties. We've been consuming the past at an accelerated rate: it takes us only five years or so to go through a decade.

For fashion purposes, everything that happened before the nineteen-twenties, when women took off their corsets, hiked up their skirts, and began to live and dress in a way that we can identify with, is prehistory. When designers reach back to a more distant past, it is not a whole image they conjure up but details of it. We know the fashions of other centuries through paintings and, later, photographs. But from the nineteen-thirties on, the clothes people wore are familiar to us mainly through movies and television. They exist in a kind of continuous present, on late-night cable TV, on video, in revival cinemas—an endless loop of the past six decades, all available simultaneously. That designers return to this material again and again is not as surprising as the fact that their fascination with it runs in cycles that seem to be sequential.

Watching designers exhume the seventies, I began to wonder whether

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we're doomed to relive the same few decades over and over forever. Since the recycling began, even designers on the cutting edge have seemed to take it for granted that the future would be simply another chapter of the past: while mainstream designers recapitulated one decade, the avant-garde would move on to the next. Those of us whose job it is to keep track of fashion witnessed these proceedings with a certain resignation, hoping (some of us) that if we let the cycle run its course it would stop with the sixties. That hope was shot down this season.

Designers twenty years ago, surveying the rubble of all the social conventions demolished during the sixties, can perhaps be excused for fleeing their own moment and taking refuge in the past. But the retro cycle in fashion has continued—not, I think, for any lack of imagination but because the mood for the last decade or so has been so bleak. Despite the hype—the celebrity designers, the supermodels, the rock stars in the front row—there is a certain sense of futility undermining fashion these days.

The resemblances between the early seventies and our own moment are not entirely superficial: the economy is in a slump, as it was then; the collective impulse is once again back to nature, in the food we eat and the shampoo we buy, in front-page alarm about the future of the planet; disillusionment with the government is epidemic. And yet there are, you would think, enough differences to give the nineteen-nineties a character and a style of their own. Nevertheless, many of the longer skirts that designers showed this season were exact replicas of the ones we wore in the seventies: skinny columns, slashed along one side seam to the thigh or up the center of the back; wrap versions falling straight and flapping open with every stride; narrow, fitted styles released in a flurry of kick pleats at the knees; and a few full swirling circles. All of which are fairly standard solutions, some more graceful than others, to the engineering problem that the midiskirt poses—how to give the knee enough range of motion for walking. The last time we wore midiskirts, it was before the advent of stretch fabrics. This season, the only new design was a result of that innovation: a long stretch tube. Frozen in a pose, it looked great—hugging the contours of the thighs, clinging to the knees. The silhouette was spindly. The minute the model started to walk, however, the glitches became apparent and the glamour collapsed. In some cases, the skirt crept upward, obliging her to stop and shimmy it back down again. In others, it was so tight that her gait was severely hobbled. In the collection that Lagerfeld designs under his own name, he presented ankle-length narrow skirts in stretch tulle, like a veil drawn taut, over opaque tights—an idea that came off as cluttered and less attractive than the leggings we already own. Virtually none of the longer skirts that designers proposed this season struck me as plausible alternatives to the short skirts women have been wearing, but not even the sight of Christy Turlington stumbling down the catwalk at Fendi in a long, tight tube skirt and platform shoes could slow the bandwagon. By the time the buyers and the press pulled into New York for the start of the American collections, in early April, the feeling was that the mini length might be credible for another season or two but then the future would be upon us, and, like it or not, skirts would be long.

Geoffrey Beene tells a story of being on a plane not long ago and being asked by one of the flight attendants for his advice about hemlines. "I can't believe you are asking me such a question," he answered. "That goes against everything that women's liberation stands for."

"But, sir," she replied, "I was never a part of that."

It is tempting to see this season's hemline controversy as yet another instance of women losing ground that they had fought so hard to win. Here, at first glance, is one more way in which the so-called post-feminist era bears considerable and disconcerting resemblance to the pre-feminist era, as if feminism were finally nothing more than a blip on the screen. "Post-feminism," like "postmodernism," is a label for an era with no identity of its own—an era invented in reaction to the one that came before it. Both movements were founded on the conviction that the previous generation's revolution was a failure, and both disdained the idealism that had prompted feminists and modernists alike to believe that they had come up with the solution to what's wrong with the world. Like postmodern architecture, post-feminism seeks refuge in historicisms, invoking a time when women, like buildings, were more decorative, more intent on pleasing the eye of the beholder.

Feminist dogma has always been hostile to fashion, on the ground that it is nothing more than an instrument of oppression—that it coerces women into squandering their money, their time, and their energies in a desperate and ultimately futile attempt to assuage their insecurities, which have been exacerbated, if not inflicted, by (what else?) fashion. This attitude is, remarkably, still alive and well, and it continues to obscure the real issues, which have more to do with how women use clothes to help them consolidate their identity and with how they choose to present themselves to the world.

Susan Faludi, in her book "Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women," depicts women in the eighties fleeing stores because they couldn't find clothes appropriate to their lives. Like the dogmatists of twenty years ago, Faludi views fashion as something foisted on women. The sensuous pleasure to be found in the slide of fabric along the skin or in the line of a seam drawn along the body's contour seems to be lost on her. If she makes backhanded acknowledgment of the way in which women look to fashion as a mirror, it is only to condemn it. "Personal insecurity is the great motivator to shop," she insists, and in support she cites a survey by the ad agency Wells Rich Greene. "The more confident and independent women became, the less they liked to shop; and the more they enjoyed their work, the less they cared about their clothes," she says. "The agency could find only three groups of women who were loyal followers of fashion: the very young, the very social, and the very anxious."

As attacks on fashion go, this one is

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not particularly new or original—part reverse snobbery, part puritanism repackaged in the wrapping of women's rights. What strikes me as more outrageous and, finally, more pernicious than accusations of this kind is the compulsion—particularly surprising on the part of feminists—to dismiss fashion, one of women's long-standing pastimes, as beneath the serious consideration of intelligent people. "It is the masculine values that prevail," Virginia Woolf remarked. "Speaking crudely, football and sport are 'important'; the worship of fashion, the buying of clothes 'trivial.' . . . This is an important book, the critic assumes, because it deals with war. This is an insignificant book because it deals with the feelings of women in a drawing-room. A scene in a battlefield is more important than a scene in a shop—everywhere and much more subtly the difference of value persists." The shift that occurred in the feminist movement in the late seventies—the realization that the goal was not for women to succeed in "a man's world" but for both sexes to come around to a greater appreciation of women's experience—seems not to apply where fashion is concerned.

For those of us who love clothes and subscribe to feminism, the problem has been as much practical as philosophical. What to wear? If fashion, like art, had traditionally been made for what feminist art historians call "the male gaze," could we somehow devise a style of dress that wouldn't look to men for their approval? Was there some other way for a woman to express her sexuality in the clothes she wore—as a statement instead of as an invitation? If tight clothes and high heels seemed to us out of the question, it was because they had no dignity: they announced a woman's eagerness to please men, on men's own terms, while who she was got lost in a blur of breasts and hips and legs. We have not been alone in our attempts to sort out these issues. During the seventies, *Vogue*, under Grace Mirabella's leadership, took up the feminist cause (which *Mirabella* has since continued). Several designers joined in. Giorgio Armani brought his expertise in menswear to bear and came up with women's tailoring that looked intelligent and poised. Donna Karan took her own, personal style and elaborated on it for the benefit of other women. Rei Kawakubo intro-

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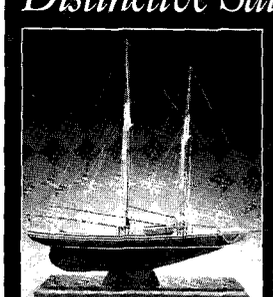

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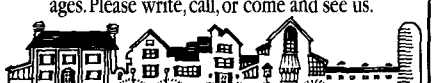

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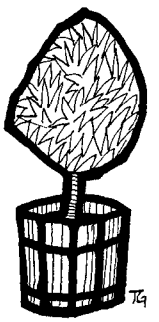
duced clothes, for Comme des Garçons, that made their appeal on a cerebral level, investigating the principles of construction and dressmaking, ignoring a woman's duty to look attractive. The irony of all this, of course, is that the great feminist designer of our century preceded the seventies wave of women's liberation by some fifty years. Coco Chanel devised a formula for women that was the equivalent of the suit for men—founded on comfort and common sense and self-assurance. If there has been a backlash in fashion during the past ten years, it has been led not by Lacroix, as the feminists contend, but by Lagerfeld, who, in the collections he has designed for the house of Chanel, has little by little obliterated Chanel's message.



A lot of the long-standing feminist anger toward fashion, it now appears, turns out to be misplaced—to be anger toward men, some of whom interpreted women's refusal to wear clothes that divulged their bodies as an affront, or, at the very least, as a sign of sexual recalcitrance. In retrospect, it seems that most feminists, dressing in such a way as to stipulate that men take an interest in us as people before they take an interest in us sexually, underestimated the degree to which sexual desire in men, however enlightened and well-meaning they may be, is in the end fetishistic, focussed on body parts rather than on the whole. To what extent are we willing to make ourselves into the images men need to get sexually aroused? Here is where the puritanism of American feminism comes into play. In America, where fashion, always burdened with the weight of moral implications, has lately been staggering under the added freight of sexual politics, complicity has become a dirty word, and what goes on between men and women is now too loaded to qualify as a sport. On the runways of Paris and Milan, however, designers continue to present clothes with a forthright sex appeal that is not, to their way of thinking, at odds with women's progress. While some American feminists have founded their polemics on the notion that what's wrong with the world is masculinity, their European counterparts have never lost sight of the male point of view.

Male fantasies persist in fashion, in collections by designers like Thierry Mugler and Gianni Versace. In the video for George Michael's "Too Funky," featuring a Mugler fashion show, one model wears a strapless leather bodysuit with motorcycle handlebars and rearview mirrors projecting from the sides of the waist. For fall, Versace presented a hybrid collection—country and Western crossed with S & M—that included evening gowns with bodices like harnesses, jeans with suède fringe outlining the contours of the buttocks, and a cowboy shirt in black leather. In interviews, Versace has consistently justified his clothes by arguing that feminism has given women the right to be sexually aggressive. Like Madonna, the new sexpot puts herself at the service of men's fantasies because she chooses to: she's in control. (This season, women of two minds about this issue can have it both ways: at Moschino, there is a bolero jacket with a photograph of bare breasts printed on the front.)

I'm willing to bet that many women, watching a show like Versace's this season, end up feeling as confused and uncomfortable as I did, and yet how dull fashion would be if men's fantasies, even the inhospitable ones, went unrepresented. But where, I wonder, are women's fantasies? Armani and Karan and other designers who have furnished women with the clothes they need for the new responsibilities in their lives are realists, rarely straying very far from the facts. Oddly enough, the leading proponent of female fantasy for the past few years has been a man—Romeo Gigli, whose rhapsodic designs in rare fabrics hold out the hope of romantic individualism.

It is the worship of Woman that fashion and feminism have in common. For all their differences, they are branches of the same religion. If fashion in its mysticism is like the Catholic Church, then feminism has been like the Reformation. For some time now, their followers have been dwindling—the result, perhaps, of widespread disenchantment with the rites of fashion or with the rigors of feminist dogma. Women are going their own ways, in the absence of any organized attempt to address the dilemmas in their lives. Meanwhile, at the Vatican of fashion, the debate about hemlines continues.

—Holly Brubach

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Louisan Variety

THREE of the four operas presented this year by the Opera Theatre of St. Louis were from the twentieth century; the fourth was Rossini's "Il Turco in Italia." Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," the most delicately beautiful of his operas, was first performed, in 1960, in Aldeburgh's little Jubilee Hall, which seats three hundred and fifty people. Although the enchantments then stole with success through larger theatres—Covent Garden, La Scala, San Francisco—in a small house they are most keenly felt. St. Louis's Loretto-Hilton Center holds nine hundred and fifty, and the "Dream" there, which was staged by Colin Graham, the artistic director of the company, was electric from the start. Poetry, prettiness, magic, and rustic humors did not conceal sharp sensual pangs or the cruelty that passions unrequited and wills thwarted can inflict; at last all was resolved in a finale as satisfying as that of "Figaro."

Peter Brook's physically vigorous and verbally, though not dramatically, unpoetic production of the "Dream" has left its mark on many later representations. In some rude modern descendants, decorativeness is wholly abjured: Bottom and Titania become an Alexandrian donkey-mounts-lady sideshow, Oberon is a monster unredeemed, and the honest tradesmen who play "Pyramus and Thisbe" ("Never anything can be amiss when simpleness and duty tender it") are mere clowns, not characters. (Bottom—as Britten shows in his setting of Bottom's aria—is in some ways a romantic ancestor of Forster's Leonard Bast.) In versions less rude, the dark undertones and firefly surface are thrillingly reconciled. So they were here.

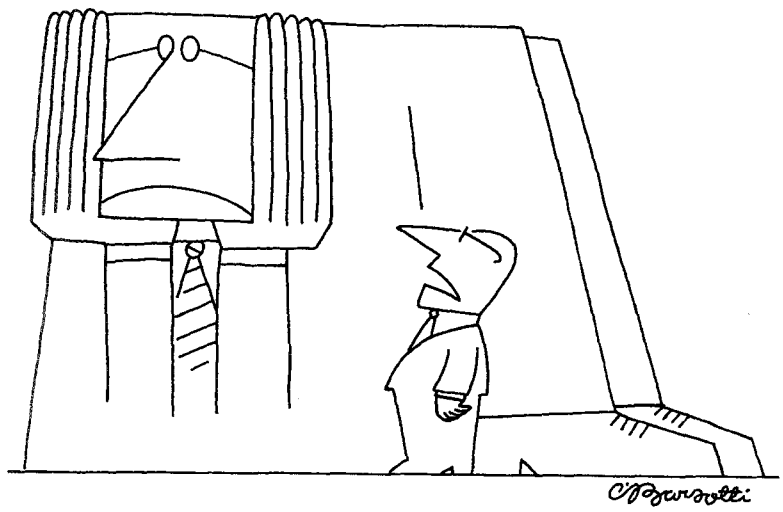
Britten allotted a sound to each group of participants. For the supernaturals, there is light percussion, harps, and a harpsichord, with a tingling celesta for Oberon, small trumpet fanfares and a little drum for Puck. Oberon is a countertenor, Titania is a coloratura soprano, her fairy attendants are trebles, and Puck is a boy who speaks with a voice just breaking. The mortal lovers—a traditional soprano, mezzo, tenor, and baritone quartet—sing to the sounds of strings and woodwinds. The six tradesmen—tenors, baritones, and basses—are accompanied by the brasses and a bassoon. The music is defining, clear-sectioned, until the plot brings about a mingling, a breaking of boundaries. Melodies, sounds, structures are exquisitely fashioned. The four quiet "sleep" chords (from muted strings, muted brasses, woodwinds, and percussion in turn) that open and underpin Act II pay tribute to Mendelssohn even while touching the twelve notes from which Western music is made. Diatonicism and a playful command of twelve-note eloquence come together. Purcell and Berg both cast a benison.

In America, as in Britain, Britten now provides most of the operatic repertory from the second half of our century. "Peter Grimes" and "Billy Budd" are the Met's modern staples, and "Death in Venice" returns to the house in 1994. In smaller theatres, "The Rape of Lucretia," "Albert Herring," and "The Turn of the Screw" are often performed. The "Dream" is heard less often (the City Opera has not done it since 1965), but the St. Louis production will surely bring it to renewed attention. (San Francisco is presenting it in November.) In Britten's lifetime, his first grand opera, "Peter Grimes" (1945), and his last opera, "Death in Venice" (1973), were acclaimed; the works between met with a critical mixture of admiration and reserve. He died not knowing how highly they would soon be valued. Their "faults"—easily perceived faults of construction and of tone, dwelt on by the early critics—faded in the light of the musical greatness. I reviewed the premières from "Billy Budd" onward and blush to reread a "Budd" review in *Music & Letters;* what I feel now about that opera found expression in these columns after the Met première, in 1978. Although I loved the "Dream" from the start, I wondered whether it was not a shade wispy for regular use. Mr. Graham's production showed its strength.

The St. Louis program synopsis was initially disconcerting, for it began:

> It has been recommended to Hermia, secretary to a mafioso godfather, Duke Theseus, that she marry Demetrius, a scion of the clan, but she prefers to run away with her childhood sweetheart, Lysander, a poet. They intend to cross the park, from East Side to West Side, by night. . . . The lovers enter the park, ignorant of the existence of the Night People who rule it after dark.

But the result was no tiresome, obtrusive updating. Derek McLane's designs and Christopher Akerlind's lighting cast a spell. An upside-down image of the Central Park South skyline was visible at the back; trees, changing positions to represent "another part of the wood," hung upside down from the flies. Oberon and Titania's quarrel had turned the world topsy-turvy. But it was a scene of beauty, with glowworms glittering, in which anything could, and did, happen. Mr. Graham no doubt wanted to remind us that amid the beguiling *rus in urbe* of the Park at night or at dawn a youth recently murdered an amorous maiden, and a gang of youths raped a young woman—and that, although those incidents are not part of the play



"I wouldn't say anything, Elliot, but your mood is affecting everyone in the office."

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or the opera, feelings that can lead to violence certainly are. This "wood near Athens" was both lovely and dangerous; through it the characters walked emotional tightropes.

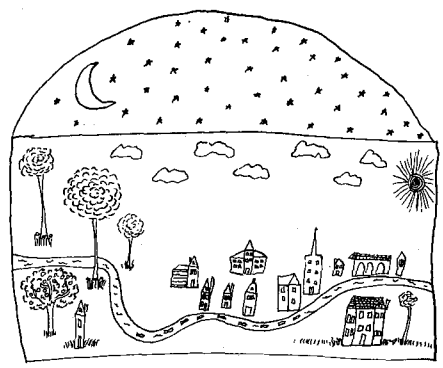
Robert Spano, the conductor, inspired members of the St. Louis Symphony to a fine-grained account of the score. Derek Lee Ragin sang Oberon with ethereal exactness and beauty; Elizabeth Futral was an alluring Titania; Ward Saxton was a captivating Puck, the best I've seen and heard; the urchin fairies—Andrew Groft, Justin Snell, Matthew Johnson, and Ryan Kelley—were at once deft singers and little toughies, as Britten required. The lovers, young and touching, were Virginia Browning, Kathryn Honan-Carter, Kevin Anderson, and Steven Combs. The tradesmen, each a rounded and amusing character, were Thomas Barrett (Bottom/Pyramus), Thomas Hammons (Quince), Bradley Williams (Flute/Thisbe, originally Peter Pears's role), Mark Anderson (Snug/Lion), Mark Urbina (Starveling/Moon), and Geoff Fine (Snout/Wall, with his wailing twelve-note declarations). Mr. Barrett earns special praise for his readiness to sing English with Broadway directness. The pompous, pumped-up tones of Scott Wilde, the Theseus, seemed out of character. To Hippolyta (Tatiana Troyanos's début role at the City Opera, in 1963) Jennifer Jones brought a regal presence.

THE Loretto-Hilton has a new stage, with a wider opening to the house than before (and improved sightlines for those in the side banks of seats), and a new permanent back wall for operas, designed by Mr. McLane. It is a tall, handsome construction, apparently of solid brick (though in fact of fibreglass), with bastions, recessions, and entrances, apertures, and a balcony that can be variously decked or masked. Mr. Graham believes that scenery has played too large a part in contemporary opera production. In *Opera News* he wrote:

> Shakespeare had no scenery. He had to make the "imaginary forces work." What he had, though, was an *acting space* onto which he poured his actors and his action. The mind's eye, provoked by the text and the actor, provided the surroundings. The words (with opera, also the music) conjure up the time of day, the place, the weather, and the atmosphere, and they do it in such a way that the audience becomes a participant rather than an onlooker. . . . Many productions that seem wonderfully exciting in the rehearsal room are compromised, even wrecked, by the addition of scenery onstage.

All very well: but what about the composers from Monteverdi onward who, unlike Shakespeare, used décor as one of the ingredients of that mingled-media dramatic form called opera—words, music, acting, dancing, scenery, lights working together? Verdi specified actions and lighting that are essential, he said, if the music is not to be "ruined." Piquant *japonaiserie*, redwood-forest romance, and majestic *chinoiserie* are built into the dramatic structure of "Madama Butterfly," "La Fanciulla del West," and "Turandot." Mr. McLane's wall—a striking object in its own right—closed his "Midsummer Night's Dream" vistas effectively (but he provided plenty of "scenery" in front of it). "Butterfly" and "Il Turco" were less happily served by the imposing classical background. Alison Chitty, the designer of Judith Weir's "The Vanishing Bridegroom," chose to mask the wall with a gauze.

WEIR's first full-length opera, "A Night at the Chinese Opera," was commissioned by the BBC, was performed (and widely toured) by Kent Opera in 1987, and had its American première, at Santa Fe, two years later. Her second, "The Vanishing Bridegroom," was commissioned by the Glasgow District Council, was performed in Glasgow in 1990, by Scottish Opera, and had its American première in St. Louis. The English National has now commissioned an opera from her. "King Harald's Saga," her three-act, nine-character, twelve-minute "grand opera" for unaccompanied soprano, is often done. (Along with "The Consolations of Scholarship," for soprano and nine players, and "Missa del Cid," for speaker and small chorus, it appears on the Novello/Barcelona disk "Three Operas," distributed here by Allegro Imports.) Weir's success is easy to understand. She is a composer of bright invention. Elegance, intelligence, humor, and economy conspire. Ideas bubble, but there is not a wasted or needless note. Stravinsky is an evident inspiration, and Messiaen and Britten leave traces.


Darryl Shedden

She writes her own librettos. "A Night at the Chinese Opera" intercuts the Yuan-dynasty play "The Chao Family Orphan" (which Metastasio drew on for his much-set "Eroe Cinese") with the adventure of a later Chao who, watching the play, discovers in it a reflection of his own life. "The Vanishing Bridegroom" links three Scottish folk tales—one containing a story within the story—that were collected and published in Gaelic, with an English translation, in the second half of the nineteenth century. (1) By Solomonic strategy, a doctor discovers which of three sons stole their late father's money, while the inner tale that forms his test tells of a bride, her bridegroom, and her lover. (2) The bridegroom, now a husband, while on his way to fetch a priest to baptize his child, is lured into fairyland, and returns years later (thinking that only a moment has passed) to find his daughter full-grown. (3) The daughter is courted by a rich, handsome stranger; a passing preacher warns her that the Devil has come a-wooing, and teaches her a spell by which she resists his wiles and then his angry attack. The stories are straightforward, dealing with what Weir calls "the things we all really think about in everyday life: death, money, sex, love, marriage, and so on." But the events are fantastic, and "the magic . . . lies in the tension between extraordinary stories and the ordinary people who tell them." Much of the libretto is taken directly from the sources; Weir adds songs, riddles, and spells from the "Carmina Gadelica"; the text is fashioned to sustain a shapely musical structure.

Imaginative sonorities, carefully paced harmony, simple yet subtle melodies, incantatory repetitions and near-repetitions varied by direct, spontaneous utterance, a spareness that is not sparseness make the opera consistently attractive and engaging. Some-

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times, I confess, I felt myself to be not so much moved as admiring cleverly planned designs and Apollonian execution. But I heard "The Vanishing Bridegroom" only once, and imagine that when the composer's evident skills are taken for granted, emotions that underlie them will be felt more strongly. Scott Bergeson conducted. Francesca Zambello directed; both she and Miss Chitty stressed the narrative plainness of the tales rather than their "magic"—until, in the final tableau, a chorus of haloed angels seemed to parody the closing scene of "Faust." The cast was able; Andrew Wentzel, as the doctor, a policeman, and the Devil, was outstanding.

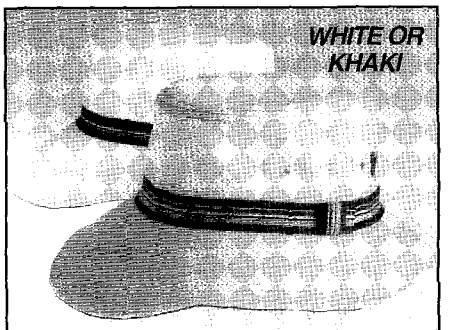
EACH year, St. Louis does a standard opera. This year, it was "Madama Butterfly" (1904), a work—like "Don Carlos," "Carmen," "The Tales of Hoffmann," "Candide," and many another—whose tangled textual history has recently been unravelled, with the result that each modern performance seems to bring different music. When St. Louis presented "Butterfly" eight years ago, I told the tale of its revisions: from the daring, unconventional work that appeared at La Scala in February, 1904, and was withdrawn after a single performance, to the surefire version that was first heard in Paris, in December, 1906. In brief, there are four main versions, which for convenience can be labelled by their places of first performance: "Milan," "Brescia," "Washington," and "Paris." The aim of the progressive cuts and revisions seems to have been threefold: to make Pinkerton a little less odious; to lighten the heavy demands on the singer of Butterfly (the original, "Milan" death scene was seven lines longer); and, quite simply, to shorten the work. Some directors and conductors pursue the sensible course of trying to distinguish between cuts and melodic rewriting that are evident improvements and cuts that were made to fit the unusual piece to early-twentieth-century expectations. (The "Milan" wedding scene goes on much too long, and the "Brescia" wedding scene rather too long; "Washington" gets it about right; in "Paris" it is too severely slashed. But that "right" is a variable dependent on the circumstances of a particular performance; what drags on in one may seem just right in another.) In 1984, St. Louis played "Washington." This year, it chose "Brescia," which retains some touching passages that Puccini later removed: notably, Butterfly's little song to her son before the vigil; Sharpless's proffer of the money Pinkerton has left for her, and her dignified rejection; a longer exchange between Butterfly and Suzuki before the death scene. St. Louis made a few small cuts, however, and played Acts II and III, as in "Milan," without an intermission.

It was interesting to hear this music. The staging, by Mr. Graham, in scenery by Marie Anne Chiment, was careful and sensitive. But the principals were disappointing: Guiping Deng, the Butterfly, had a small, monochrome voice; Rick Moon, the Pinkerton, was unlyrical in tone and phrasing. Stephen Lord's conducting was summary and blunt.

SINCE "Il Turco" was given in an English translation that I made for the City Opera fourteen years ago, I'll say no more about the performance than that I thought the staging was coarse and shtick-laden, and the conducting harshly unloving. The Mozartian quality of Rossini's score—scarcely apparent here—has often been remarked. In a fascinating program essay Philip Gossett—calling the work an "elegant yet disturbing opera buffa" and a "comedy of manners, whose themes of disguise and of the boundaries between reality and imagination seem peculiarly modern"—pointed out connections with "Così Fan Tutte," another drama whose action is directed by one of its characters. Franz Seydelmann's "Turco in Italia," the libretto of which Felice Romani adapted for Rossini's use, played in Vienna from May to July of 1789, and "Così" followed in January, 1790. And at La Scala in 1814 "Così" had a long run of performances while Rossini was composing *his* "Turco"; the Fiordiligi and Guglielmo became his Donna Fiorilla and Selim.

—ANDREW PORTER

EDITORS' NOTE: Andrew Porter, who has been our music critic for the past twenty years, is returning to London to become the music critic of the *Observer*. Paul Griffiths, who has been the music critic of the London *Times*, will be writing Musical Events.



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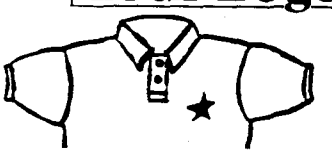

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

JUNE 25

THOUGH the Presidential campaign continues to preoccupy people here, other things are actually happening and do get our attention—however fitful. Boris Yeltsin's visit last week was a reminder that there is a world out there. Moreover, it's a far more complicated and difficult world than the one the country faced during the Cold War—Yugoslavia is the most painful example—and the Bush Administration is searching for new ways to deal with it. The Congress—especially the House, with its bank scandal—is having a bad case of the glums.

The Administration was justifiably pleased with the arms-control agreement announced during Yeltsin's visit, and its leading foreign-policy officials hit the airwaves to trumpet the dramatic decrease in destabilizing nuclear weapons on both sides, with Russia even accepting a deeper cut than the United States had to make. It had been a while since the Administration had good news even in foreign policy, which Bush's advisers are counting on to be a plus (there aren't many) in the election. In Panama, the President's having to rush away from the speaker's platform to escape the tear gas set off by U.S.-trained riot police (no less) to quell an anti-U.S. demonstration seemed a metaphor for the kind of time he's been having. Nothing seems to go right, and he is said to know that he is surrounded by a weak set of advisers. (His friends have certainly made a point of telling him.) More thought on the part of his advisers would have spared him the Panama embarrassment. The rally to celebrate the conquering hero could have been held in a safer place. The debacle brought to mind the Japan trip earlier this year. Bush's next stop after Panama, the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, brought him little glory. By managing to isolate himself on some of the issues there, he undermined his claim to be the "Environmental President," and looked beleaguered. The issues over which he refused to sign the biological-diversity treaty (a treaty calling on nations to protect the diversity of the world's animals and plants, and asking the wealthy nations to transfer biotechnology to poor countries) were valid ones, even according to some environmentalists, but they were also negotiable—as William Reilly, the lonely administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, tried to tell Bush, in a memo leaked presumably by an opponent of Reilly within the Administration. Reilly, a true environmentalist but far from a radical, has a lot of opponents within the Administration, which, starting at the top, is driven by a predilection for deregulation and accommodating friendly business interests. Bush's environmental record has been a spotty one. His insistence in Rio that he was trying to protect American jobs was considered good politics by some of his advisers, but it made others weep. One adviser said to me recently, "People who have been around the environmental issues have learned how to speak about them in a way consistent with our conservative values but also pleasing to environmentalists." The blame for the President's bad P.R. in Rio is placed on White House Chief of Staff Sam Skinner and on Clayton Yeutter, the President's adviser for domestic policy. The connection between what Bush was doing in Rio and jobs here may be a difficult one for voters to draw, and that there is an absolute tradeoff between environmental protection and jobs is disputed by even some Administration officials as well as mainstream environmentalists.

THE ghastly conflict in Yugoslavia is a symbol of the new difficulties in the post-Cold War world. As some people had predicted, the disappearance of the Iron Curtain allowed long-suppressed—but no less bitter—ethnic hatreds to break out once more. We're facing the continuing consequences—frozen in time during the reigns of Fascism and Communism in Central Europe—of the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. The Administration is groping for a policy to deal with the outbreaks that have occurred and will occur, and searching for new institutions and instrumentalities to deal with them. As one high foreign-policy official put it, organizing an international response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait was a breeze by comparison. In the current cases, there is no valuable natural resource at stake, no Saudi Arabia seeking protection and willing to pay for it, and no national leader quite as egregious as Saddam Hussein.

The Administration's change of policy in late May, from one that was standoffish while the Europeans tried to deal with the problem to one that involved calling on the United Nations to invoke sanctions against Serbia, was motivated by a variety of considerations, not the least of which was Secretary of State James Baker's conclusion that our inaction was becoming a political liability. Also, Croatian-Americans, whose homeland had been under attack, are more active in our domestic politics than are Serbian-Americans. (There are more than twice as many Croatian-Americans as Serbian-Americans.) The Croatian-Americans had supported Patrick Buchanan, because he was readier than the Administration to recognize an independent Croatia.

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The policy shift was also brought about by the utter failure of the European Community's effort, and the implausibility of our continuing to rely on it. Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, and Lawrence Eagleburger, the Deputy Secretary of State and a former Ambassador to Yugoslavia, had been urging a more active policy for some time—putting more pressure, including economic pressure, on the Serbs. The idea was to stop the Serbs at the border of Croatia before they invaded. But both men warned that the crisis wasn't likely to be resolved without military intervention. Like Baker, the Pentagon was opposed, as it is to any military action in which it cannot be certain of being given the wherewithal to achieve a quick and successful outcome. Nonetheless, in recent days Administration officials have signalled publicly that there may have to be military action (preferably not unilateral)—and soon—to save the people of Sarajevo from starving to death.

A number of nationalistic crises are lining up behind Yugoslavia for the attention of our policymakers: the Albanians in Serbia and Macedonia; the Turks' complaints about Muslims being mistreated in Azerbaijan; North Ossetia in Russia and South Ossetia in Georgia; Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian stronghold within Azerbaijan; tensions between Hungary and Romania over minorities; problems among Russia, Ukraine, and Romania over Moldova. One official says it's unfortunate that the Yugoslav crisis came first, because it is probably the most difficult to deal with. But the other ones don't seem easy. The hope is that the Russians and the fifty-one-nation Conference on Security and Coöperation in Europe (C.S.C.E.) might play a role, along with the United States, in trying to tamp down the violence. The idea is that NATO and the new North Atlantic Coöperation Council (made up of NATO, Eastern European nations, and Russia and other republics) would provide the troops to back up the C.S.C.E.'s efforts.

In a talk I had with him recently, Scowcroft said, "We're moving into a different era, where intervention in these things may be more of a necessity than it ever was before." The reason, he explained, is that dealing with these problems represents another step, a new magnitude, in trying to help whole populations obtain human rights. Scowcroft said, "It's part of the new world. How do you deal with these sorts of problems? Unilateral behavior is tough and most of the time doesn't work." The mass movement of populations as a solution is generally ruled out as inhumane. Scowcroft said, "What we're doing is feeling our way as to how the responsible powers—the U.N. Security Council and others—can exercise authority to resolve some of these issues." He added, "We've got the best opportunity we've had at least in this century to help construct a world move to U.S. values. But it sure won't happen by accident."

To some foreign-policy officials, the question is whether the United States has the will to stay engaged, and not focus entirely on domestic matters. Scowcroft, who from the outset of this Administration has worked unbelievably hard, says, "It's a curious thing—I'm busier now than I've ever been. Now that overwhelming issues are behind us, these other areas assume more importance. We can't ignore them anymore."

THE Congress, particularly the House of Representatives, is feeling battered. As of now, a total of fifty members are retiring, and twelve have been defeated in primaries. (Another thirteen are running for other offices.) A Democratic congressman said to me not long ago, "People used to be in Congress and run against it. The bank matter cut off that route of escape." The members seem to be dropping like flies, and this produces an eerie atmosphere. The House is still suffused with the gloom brought on by the bank scandal, which appears to have been much overblown. Members are most uncomfortable with the knowledge that a special counsel, retired Judge Malcolm Wilkey, appointed in March by the Attorney General, has access to all their records at the now defunct House bank and proposes to "clear"—or not clear—individual members of criminal wrongdoing between now and the November elections. Wilkey hasn't cited any federal laws that may have been violated, but he told the New York *Times* that some House members "may very well be prosecuted." So, for at least the next few months, federal investigators will be combing through highly personal records (cancelled checks) of all the members for the last

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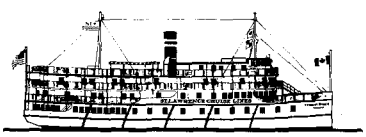

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three years. (The checks could have been written to cover the expenses for girlfriends, psychiatrists, or what have you.) Among House Democrats, there is a very strong suspicion that Judge Wilkey's investigation is an election-year fishing expedition.

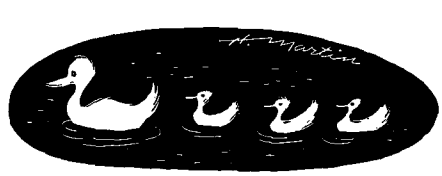
The great public misunderstanding about the bank scandal is the idea (fostered by the press) that members had "bounced" checks; for many members, the problem was that the bank *didn't* bounce checks but carried overdrafts, some of them brought about by sloppy bookkeeping practices of the bank itself, with the members unaware of the overdrafts. Other members may well have taken advantage of the bank's indulgent policy, and deliberately and routinely run up overdrafts. The practices of the bank amounted to an interest-free overdraft policy, with the cost carried by other members' accounts, not by the taxpayers. Wilkey suspects "a classic check-kiting scheme."

In the view of many observers, Wilkey has not only indulged in prosecutorial overreach but also intruded on the separation of powers. Yet when House Speaker Thomas Foley moved in late April to block the prosecutor's subpoena, numerous Democrats, terrified of appearing to be hiding something, didn't back him up. Nor did Minority Leader Robert Michel, who had once indicated that he would. Michel was under pressure from House Republicans—in particular, a group of younger ones who have milked the bank scandal for all it's worth in order to turn out as many Democrats as possible, even though Republicans had overdrafts as well. (Among these is the firebrand Newt Gingrich, of Georgia, who now may be in some reëlection trouble because of his own twenty-two overdrafts.)

Many House Democrats are angry at Foley for not shutting down the bank two years ago, when a report from the General Accounting Office cited some questionable bank practices. Foley did direct that there be some changes in the bank's practices, but didn't follow through in seeing that they were carried out. (The bank was shut down last October.) He is also blamed for not seeing the potential political fallout from the bank story this year, but no one is clear on what he should have done once the story started to break. To some extent, the anger at Foley stems from a tendency on the part of many members to blame whoever is the Speaker for all sorts of things. (Jim Wright, Foley's predecessor, was accused of being too dictatorial; Foley is accused of being too laid back.) One gets various estimates from Capitol Hill as to whether Foley's Speakership is in trouble; this may depend largely on the post-election mood of House Democrats.

The bank scandal seems to have affected some races for renomination to a House seat. Four members with a large number of overdrafts have been defeated, but there were usually other factors involved as well. (Eleven members with at least a hundred overdrafts each have announced their retirement.) Some members with a significant number of overdrafts have been renominated, and one, Barbara Boxer, won a Democratic nomination for the Senate despite a hundred and forty-three overdrafts. The public seems to be less worked up over the issue than the media and the talk-show hosts. A couple of House members speculated aloud recently that some of their colleagues, panicked about the bank scandal, quit too soon.

In both the House and the Senate, there is more than a little resentment at the press's lionization of members who have quit, complaining publicly that they were frustrated by the "gridlock." Perhaps more credit should go to those members—and it's a large number of them—who are not at all hacks and are prepared to stay and to try to cut through the paralysis and make the place work better. Despite the public disrespect and the difficulties, a surprising number of senators and representatives have zest for their job, and see the gridlock as another challenge. (And some bills do get passed.) The resentment is underscored by the sense that many are leaving for reasons other than those stated. Numerous House members have quit because they were facing difficult or impossible renomination or reëlection challenges as a result of redistricting; Senator Warren Rudman, Republican of New Hampshire, who is rightly esteemed, may well be leaving because of the frustrations over government paralysis



he has expressed, but he had also been telling a number of friends that he wants to make more money. Those members who said that they were quitting because of the gruelling pace—the concurrent requirements to be in three subcommittee meetings, or on the House or Senate floor, and meet all the constituents' demands, travelling home most weekends and having to raise reëlection funds virtually all the time—do have a valid point. The cartoon picture of Congress as a bunch of lazy slobs is wide of the mark.

Not all the paralysis is indigenous. Bush loves to brandish his veto, requiring the Democrats to come up with the votes of two-thirds of the members of each chamber to override him. As Bush likes to point out, every veto of his Presidency has prevailed. And absent Presidential leadership it's very difficult for the opposition party to take collective action. But it's not impossible, and other factors behind the lack of significant congressional action on the issues that people care about most—health care, education, the economy—are the special interests and their money, the fear of public reaction against measures to raise revenues, unwieldy staffs, a bewildering array of overlapping (and competing) subcommittees, and halting leadership. The Senate's rules make each member an autonomous power, with the result that the place is very hard to manage. A number of members of Congress, worried about the inability of the institution to function well and also about public perceptions, have introduced reforms. Many past reforms have had unintended and unwelcome consequences.

THIS entr'acte between the primaries and the Party Conventions may well be looked back upon as one of the decisive periods in the 1992 campaign. It was during this period that Bill Clinton was to get himself in better political shape going into the Democratic Convention, in mid-July. Unless he did, the thinking went, he had little chance in November. The presence of Ross Perot in the race, of course, changes all previous political formulas, but Clinton went into June in poor political shape—running third in almost all nationwide polls, and second or third (mostly third) in state polls. More important, his "negatives"—the number of people who view him unfavorably—were still running

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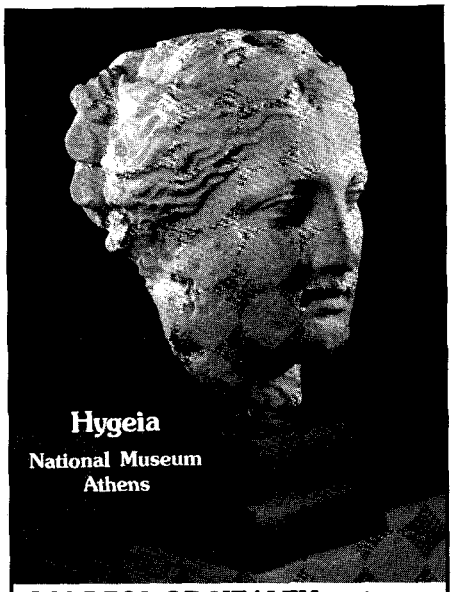
high for a Presidential candidate at this point. But then so were George Bush's. Recently, in the light of all the critical stories about him, Ross Perot's negatives have started to climb. (Still, according to *The Hotline*, a daily political newsletter, as of today—if one includes polls that are within the margin of error—Perot would have enough Electoral College votes to win the Presidency.)

By late June, Clinton hadn't pushed his negatives down. He tried everything: appearing on as many TV talk shows as possible, picking a fight with Jesse Jackson, putting out an economic program. His appearing on "The Arsenio Hall Show" wearing shades and playing the saxophone seemed a mistake, since he didn't need to reinforce his image as a swinger. He did nicely talking to young people on MTV, but his own "town meeting," on NBC (paid for by the Democratic National Committee, since the Clinton campaign is in debt), was a dud, with Clinton going on in a not very interesting format about his six-point programs to deal with various problems. (Further paid television programs—three had been planned—were cancelled. His advisers say they aren't necessary in view of all the free airtime he's been given lately.)

The sad thing about Clinton's campaign for the Presidency is that, while of the three candidates he is without question the best informed about our domestic problems—has given them more thought and time—he hasn't been able thus far to get across what he really thinks and cares about. In part, this is because his answers are so dense, in part because people have impressions of him, formed early in the campaign—and to some extent reinforced over time—that intrude between him and his audience. Clinton's advisers continued to be frustrated by his refusal—or inability, or both—to boil down what he's saying into a clear theme or message. Clinton has held out, worried that if he said one thing he'd be leaving out something else important. A strong impression that Clinton has given people is that he is, in this year of anti-politics, a "politician." A great deal about him seems calculated; only occasionally does he come across as genuine—at which times he is a far more appealing person—and the extraordinary amount of free airtime he's had in the past few weeks doesn't seem to have done him much good. A leading Democrat who wishes Clinton well said to me recently, "He has to say something unexpected and different, and have a theme. He's not breaking through the clutter. If you ask people what he's for, they can't tell you. He meanders around. People think there's a trick behind it."

If it's the entr'acte, it's time for the Democratic nominee to have to deal with Jesse Jackson—a process that proved painful and costly to Clinton's predecessors Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis, both of whom had excellent records on civil rights, as does Clinton. Clinton's imbroglio with Jackson was part of a larger strategy of trying to demonstrate that he would "challenge" the Democratic interest groups by going before them and saying something they didn't want to hear. There were some mild versions of this when he told the United Auto Workers that he favored a free-trade agreement with Mexico, which they oppose, and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees that he would cut one hundred thousand *federal* jobs. (AFSCME had sent Clinton signals that a frontal challenge wouldn't be well received.) But such a strategy is an abstraction—an artifice intended to create a certain impression. By definition, it's not something that comes from within the candidate. Also, the strategy was too obvious (his aides made sure the press understood what he was doing)—and it was never more so than in the case of Jackson. Before Clinton made his luncheon speech to the Rainbow Coalition on June 13th, his staff circulated the word that Clinton was going to "challenge" Jackson.

Strange things have become big subjects in elections, and heretofore little-known events can suddenly become a very big deal. Clinton's speech, in which he landed on a month-old Washington *Post* interview with the rap singer Sister Souljah, and in effect took Jackson to task for having had her on the coalition's program the night before, made a very big thing of something most of us hadn't heard of. (Sister Souljah had said, in talking about the Los Angeles riots, "If black people kill black people every day, why not have a week and kill white people?") Clinton did achieve his two immediate



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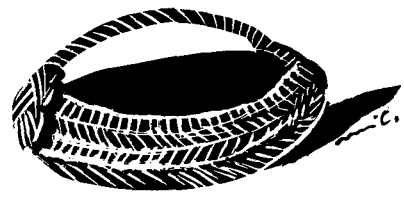
goals: he got himself back in the news, having been suffering from a virtual blackout because of all the attention to Perot (in whom there was greater audience interest), and he let the word go forth that he would stand up to Jackson. But there were aspects of Clinton's move that troubled even some of his friends, white as well as black, and he may have stirred up more of a fight with Jackson than he had bargained for. One problem with Clinton's move, even according to some people friendly toward him, was that it was so obviously calculated. These people and others argue that if there was to be a challenge to Jackson it should have been on some substantive matter on which they disagreed. (The rest of Clinton's speech was sympathetic to the coalition's goals.) Also, it seemed almost as if Clinton and his people were trying to goad Jackson: Clinton met with Jackson for half an hour before the luncheon address and, by design, didn't tell him what was coming. Jackson may also have been put in a bad mood, I am reliably informed, because he was told by Clinton at that meeting that he wasn't on his shortlist for the Vice-Presidency.

Jackson is skilled at accumulating grievances, and perhaps he would have found something else, but Clinton handed him one. Further, Jackson has since argued—and no one has disputed—that Sister Souljah was at the meeting as part of an effort to convert her into a more constructive force; Clinton and his staff apparently didn't bother to find this out. So Jackson has a point when he calls the incident a "ploy" and a "plan to show strength at our expense." How all this will wash in November—how much of the black vote Clinton won't get as a result (several black leaders thought he was right), and how many whites will vote for him because of this incident—is very problematic. But Clinton badly needs a large black vote, especially in a three-man race.

The idea of Clinton's working out an agenda with congressional leaders, pushed by Governor Mario Cuomo, who had become a public nag on the subject, was briefly embraced by the Clinton campaign but then fell through, because of its obvious flaw (this isn't a time for Clinton to be posing for pictures with congressional leaders), and a more subtle one: members of Congress weren't overly eager to be so closely identified with Clinton.

Clinton's economic program was aimed at contrasting himself with Bush, whose program is unclear, and with Perot, who has yet to offer one, and also at protecting himself from charges that he is calling for more programs than he can pay for. It also slanted some of his earlier proposals more toward urban areas—to try to keep the Democratic base intact. Clinton is suffering from disaffection on his left, caused by his centrist, Democratic Leadership Council-inspired campaign. The judgment had been that the only way the Democrats could win the Presidency was through a more centrist campaign than had been run since Jimmy Carter—and that the liberal wing of the Party would have nowhere else to go. Though Clinton moved to the left in the primaries (largely because of Paul Tsongas), some liberals still won't support him, and some have gone over to Perot. Last week, a poll in Minnesota, probably the most dependably liberal state in the country, had Perot at forty per cent, Bush at thirty per cent, and Clinton at twenty-three per cent.

There are some problems with Clinton's economic program. Called "Putting People First," it was designed to show that he wants to "invest in the future" through putting more money—fifty billion a year for four years—into education and training and infrastructure and investment in research and new businesses. But, like Clinton's earlier campaign, it shies away from some hard questions—it trims. Though he had suggested earlier this month that the better-off should pay more taxes on Social Security, his new plan makes no mention of this touchy subject. (It does call for a higher Medicare premium for the better-off.) His reducing the tax cut he had proposed for the middle class early this year is no surprise, because he had made little mention of it as the campaign went along, and had never seemed very enthusiastic about it. Tsongas's gibes notwithstanding, the tax cut wasn't all that popular with the public, and it would have made little difference to people's well-being. Clinton's proposals for paying for the items he calls for and also cutting the deficit in half in four years (in the primaries, he had said he hoped to eliminate it in four years) rest on some shaky economic assumptions (of the sort the Reagan and Bush Administrations used) and call for taxes on easy marks—the wealthy, and foreign corporations doing business in the United States. No very controversial spending cuts were called for. There is much that's worthy in Clinton's plan—and it may at long last provide him with a theme ("putting people first")—and it's better than anything his competitors have offered as yet. And of course there are what many politicians still consider election exigencies. But Clinton blew an opportunity to show that he's ready to abandon business-as-usual in Washington.



IT was perhaps inevitable that Ross Perot's candidacy would hit turbulent water, as it did this week. As the latest (if still unofficial) entrant into the Presidential race, it was his turn to receive media scrutiny, and stories were already out there that suggested some troubling aspects of his nature—vindictiveness and wont to resort to extraordinary means against opponents, including a penchant for gathering dirt. A recent investigative piece in the *Wall Street Journal* detailed alleged investigations by Perot into companies he had been in conflict with in his business dealings and into the personal lives of his own employees, and on Sunday the Washington *Post* described a series of investigations by Perot into then Vice-President Bush, with whom he had had a falling out over possible M.I.A.s still in Southeast Asia. Worried about the potential cumulative effect of these and other negative stories, plus a strong attack on him by Bush allies and aides, Perot's advisers decided that he should combat the charges publicly, in a series of television appearances, including his first press conference.

Perot's denial of all the stories, or his attempt to cast them in a more benign light, may have gone down well with most of his followers (who don't much like the press anyway), but they left some questions, and didn't explain away a number of the allegations. Perot is a skilled salesman—that's why he's so rich—and if a salesman has to exaggerate or embroider in order to close the sale, so be it. Perot is also a skilled blame-shifter—some-

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one is always out to get him, be it "Washington insiders" or the Washington "establishment," or, in this case, the "Republican dirty-tricks committee"—but even if, as Republican Party chairman Rich Bond has admitted, Bush campaign aides have passed on to reporters damaging information about Perot, that doesn't mean that the recent stories (it's not clear whether any of them originated in the Bush camp) aren't true, or that conducting "opposition research" and passing some of the goods on to reporters isn't a time-honored, bipartisan tradition. Still, Perot seemed to have Bond on the defensive on this matter. And Perot has in fact shown a clear pattern of mercilessness toward opponents, and of apparent paranoia, and a predilection for paramilitary and fairly crackpot schemes.

After hesitating over how to deal with Perot, the Bush people in recent weeks have been going at him hard. This reflects their concern over how well Perot has been doing; Plan A had been to "marginalize" Clinton first. Some of their criticism is based on focus-group research with people in Paramus, New Jersey—a Bush-campaign mecca, since it was people there whose responses in 1988 encouraged the Bush campaign to use the issues of the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and Willie Horton. This time, it was found that people could be led to think that Perot is weird—a word Bush campaign aides now use—and a sinister figure. (The Clinton camp found similar results in its own polling, but for the moment is content to let Bush and Perot have at each other.) Now Bush people publicly go after Perot as "scary," "bizarre," and (Vice-President Dan Quayle) "a temperamental tycoon that has contempt for the Constitution."

Both the Bush and Clinton campaigns have been relying on, and encouraging, the press to take Perot down a few pegs, and hoping that Perot might make a mistake under the pressure. (Thus far, he's kept his cool.) It would be logical that the Bush campaign is trying to get Perot out of the way—after which it would turn to Clinton—by alienating from him his following among college-educated, upscale voters (who have never given Clinton much support), and the way to do that would be by raising civil-liberties questions about Perot, and questioning his understanding of the Constitution. It also appears to be trying to suggest that Perot isn't the kind of person who should be President, so that if Clinton lost voters they wouldn't go to Perot.

It's hard to guess how damaging these and other stories will be, because we've had no experience with anything like the Perot phenomenon, which is fuelled as much by disgust with the other candidates and with the state of politics—by a desire to conduct a revolution—as it is by faith in Perot himself. (A recent Times Mirror poll found that when the name of General Norman Schwarzkopf was substituted for Perot's, Schwarzkopf did almost as well.)

THE Bush campaign is still fumbling for a rationale for his candidacy for a second term, and trying to make better use of the President's time—but it still has a long way to go. The optimistic view from within the Bush camp—there is definitely some pessimism—is that when people come right down to it they will see Bush as the safest choice. The Bush campaign will try to establish the idea that Perot and Clinton are too risky. (A similar strategy was followed against Dukakis in 1988.) The negative campaign—Bush people call it "comparative"—is something Bush and his people are good at, and comfortable with, and it would mask the weaknesses in Bush's agenda for governing. Whether the political climate for such a campaign will be as welcoming as it was in the past is anybody's guess.

A lot of people are getting prepared for this election's being settled in the House of Representatives. House members are being asked whether they would vote the way their district voted, the way their state voted, or according to which candidate won a plurality in the country at large. They have varying answers, but the literal Party line for Democrats in both chambers is to say, "I don't expect it to come to that." They have also been instructed by their leadership offices to say that they think Clinton can win. (After the third Democratic member of Congress does this, you get the picture.) Senators, who would choose the Vice-President, are also polishing their answers. Rich Bond is working on a fallback strategy in case no one gets the necessary two hundred and seventy Electoral College votes. He calls it Operation 270, Phase Two. —ELIZABETH DREW

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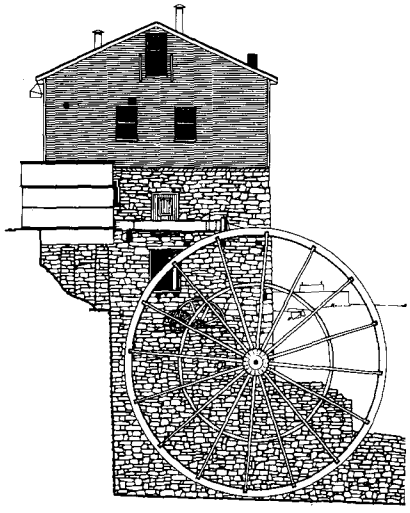

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BOOKS

The Little Big Book

UP to now, most readers who have encountered the writings of Eric Kraft have done so through two novels—"Herb 'n' Lorna" and "Reservations Recommended," which came out in 1988 and 1990. But over the last decade Kraft has generated a cult following through a series of eight slender paperback novellas—set in fictional Babbington, Long Island, on Bolotomy Bay—which irradiate with humor and clarity a world of tract houses, public schools, and the hearty bromides of the American nineteen-fifties. The novellas were issued, beginning in 1982, by Applewood Books, a small Boston-area publisher; the books were always hard to find and are now out of print. It was not their obscurity that made them cult objects—or not only their obscurity—but, rather, their intensely personal quality, which turned the unstated pact that is always present between reader and author into something that felt more exclusive, like a private joke. The eight novellas (along with a new one) have now been collected into a hefty volume called "Little Follies: The Personal History, Adventures, Experiences & Observations of Peter Leroy (so far)" (Crown; $22), and previous initiates into Kraft's world will have to forgo the coziness of belonging to a privileged élite. The secret is out.

Mostly, what happens in the novellas is that time passes: "so far" stretches from infancy to the shaky verge of puberty. Their claim to fame is the creation, through a profusion of literary and visual devices, of a reality that is recognizable and believable but also frankly artificial and contrived. At times, reading Kraft is like stumbling across memories of your own life, and yet the work is self-consciously—pointedly—literary. Its allusions, some blatant and others invisibly woven in, range from Proust to Mark Twain. Its jokes range in style from buffoonish vaudeville to the kind of deadpan drollery you find in Raymond Queneau, while the prematurely ripe perceptions of the narrator's younger self inevitably call to mind the pseudo-biography of the literary prodigy in Steven Millhauser's "Edwin Mullhouse."

In the earliest installment, Peter Leroy performs impossible feats of memory, at one point placing himself in his high chair trying "disdainfully" to push to one side of the tray a piece of toast that was retrieved from the floor with "cat hairs and a little fluff ball . . . stuck to it." In later episodes, he is often consciously aping the adults around him, but not altogether in the way a child normally would: at the age of eight, Peter refers to a beer manufactured by an ancestor as being "not like the insipid pisswater they try to pass off on people nowadays," and a year later he describes a classmate to whom he feels no attraction whatsoever (a point central to the story, since she is hotly pursuing him) as "quite a little number." That these stories are about a child, beginning with his departure from the hospital where he was born and ending with his birth as a writer, around the age of eleven, does not in the least preclude their being, thanks to a witty prematurity, preoccupied with sex. Peter progresses from his sexy neighbors in "My Mother Takes a Tumble" (the opening story) to twins who demonstrate that girls are not castrated boys in "Do Clams Bite?" (the second one) and eventually to a boys' adventure serial featuring a certain improbable maid: Peter imagines her imprisoned in a bathtub full of Jell-O from which her rescuer can release her only by eating his way toward her naked flesh with a spoon—"Not a big spoon. A little spoon, a demitasse spoon."

What the stories gracefully decline to be preoccupied with is their narrator. The people looming largest on Peter's early emotional horizon—and hence in the book—are his two grandfathers, a bachelor neighbor, and a rough-and-ready older boy, each of whom can be seen as initiating this thoughtful child into a version of manhood to which he would otherwise be unlikely to aspire, or at which he must fail. He is inadequate at clamming with his father's father, useless in building a shortwave radio with his mother's father or a boat with his pal, and can win arguments with the neighbor, Dudley Beaker, only in revisionist fantasy.

The propensity of memory, and fiction, for revision is something the adult Peter makes much of in prefaces to the novellas, where he purports to account for oddities of narration. But what follows invariably contradicts the prefaces, and a network of additional tiny contradictions leaps out as one proceeds. The preface to "My Mother

"I'll be lunching at my desk, Peggy."

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Takes a Tumble" says, logically enough, that the following story concerns the significance of a day when Mrs. Leroy fell from her lawn chair. It turns out, though, that the real significance of that day is the introduction of the Leroy family to Dudley Beaker's new sweetheart, Eliza Foote—who turns out to be the central character—and the whole story takes a tumble if you remember that Peter has asserted in the preface that Eliza Foote is the major element of fiction in the story. More outrageously contradictory is the preface to "The Fox and the Clam," which discusses a fable and a boy called Matthew. In the story, the narrator meets Matthew in nursery school and encounters the fable in an anthology titled "The Little Folks' Big Book." But the preface has told us that the fable was not really in the "Big Book" and that "I didn't meet Matthew until I entered high school."

Even the information within the frame of the preface is likely to wobble off the canvas. In "Tumble," as in all the stories, Peter's grandfather is a Studebaker salesman. (In "Herb 'n' Lorna," which also involves some of the "Little Follies" characters, his job figures in the plot and is "documented," as in a biography, with glossy pages of photographs midway through the book.) But in the preface to "Tumble" Peter assures us that he invented his grandfather's career, because he needed to explain why everyone on their street owned a Studebaker: "I knew that if I included this remarkable fact without explanation the reader would regard it as gratuitously absurd." He then goes into an elaborate backpedalling refinement of his description of the houses in the neighborhood, in which is buried the news that on the other side of the street there were no Studebakers, "despite the efforts of my grandfather"—efforts that we've just been told didn't exist.

The sincere and cautious tone of these prefaces is that of someone struggling for truth. They're like the italicized interpolations in Mary McCarthy's "Memories of a Catholic Girlhood" ("*The most likely thing, I fear, is that I fused two memories.* Mea Culpa"). But this narrator is either remarkably careless or lying through his teeth. In either case, the scrupulosity of the prefaces makes you believe in a real historical past belonging to a person named Peter Leroy—that is, makes

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you believe in the stories. That the adult Peter Leroy confesses to having made things up only enhances his credibility; if you don't exactly believe him you nevertheless find yourself believing *in* him. His comradely confessions of authorial high jinks invite you to feel superior, as the worldly reader who knows all about things like "willing suspension of disbelief," and at the same time you do, quite simply, believe. In effect, you are always reading at least two stories: the manifest one, which is clever, anecdotal, suspenseful, and funny, and a mystery, full of clues about the construction of the very book you are reading.

The stories are not without their own double messages. The Eliza Foote supposedly invented by the invented author of "My Mother Takes a Tumble" materializes in response to an ad placed by a "lovely young woman in unfortunate circumstances" looking for a Lonely Man. The person behind the ad, however, is not a woman, lovely or otherwise, but the suave and pompous Dudley Beaker, who hopes to cash in by creating a form of epistolary soft porn. What emerges is an epistolary romance—or romantic travesty. Eliza answers the ad as "John Simpson"; Dudley writes back as "Mary Strong." Comic cross-purposes proliferate, and the correspondence is soon a mishmash of furious crossings out and veiled reproaches. The comic potential of cross-dressing has been amply demonstrated by the likes of Mozart and Shakespeare, and is as old as theatre itself. But this is mental cross-dressing, and what you have to do while reading it—to keep in mind that the man, writing as a woman, thinks he is writing to another man, and that the woman, while imagining herself into the voice of a man, is writing to another woman, who really isn't one—may make you feel that your mind is working as a gender-tracking literary abacus.

Baroque as the narration is, poking in several directions at once, it is always moving forward, in a way that both reflects and exemplifies the passage of time. The stories are Proustian in intent, if not in style. It doesn't take twelve years to read the nine Peter Leroy novellas—it probably doesn't take twelve hours—but the stories are a deceptively modest attempt to render the very substance of experience in its smallest, stop-action increments. The allusions to "Remembrance of Things Past"—Peter's eventual wife is named Albertine, and he refers to Balbec as one of the places that he "could, someday, actually visit"—are jokes with serious purpose (which is more or less the m.o. of the whole enterprise).

Both the modesty and the seriousness of purpose are encapsulated in a three-page essay, in a story called "The Static of the Spheres," on the nature of time and the making of toast. Peter extolls an appliance of his grandmother's that conveys bread slices in a "rhythmic rightward shuffle" progressing toward toast:

> From a very early age, I loved watching—and listening to—the operation of this toaster. As the toaster operated, it produced a repetitive sound from somewhere inside the machine, from the scraping of some parts against others, a sound that I interpreted as words, the words *Annie ate her radiator*, repeated over and over while the bread toasted. I would sit and watch and listen to the toaster and watch the bread through the little window and try to decide where in its passage from left to right it became toast. And from that toaster I learned to think of time as a belt, to think of being as being in transit, and I laid the groundwork for a persistent nostalgic affection for the wave theory of electromagnetic radiation and round-faced watches and slide rules, and I developed a sense of time's passing.

The suburban landscape of "Little Follies" is scattered with relics like this toaster, lovingly reconstructed or resurrected in words or else in drawings, by three illustrators, that are straight-faced in presentation but usually ridiculous in placement or substance. There are slide rules (shown in a diagram, as if you might never have seen one), Studebakers, short-wave radios and radio dramas, paint-by-number kits, Brownie snapshots (rendered in a pencil-shaded naturalistic style), interchangeable postwar houses with attic-like unfinished second floors, and model boats and airplanes. The glamour of suits, small talk, Martinis, and adulthood is evoked, and so is the memory of woollen bathing suits that tie with a string, do-it-yourself projects (equipped with startlingly frank instructions proffering "hour after interminable hour of baffling precision work . . . sure to bring you an almost enervating sense of satisfaction"), clamshell ashtrays, and words and expressions like "wingding," "whoopdedo," and "guilty as sin." Even things that have remained a part of daily life reclaim a lost aura of mystery: Coke sold at gas stations, outboard motors, twins, toast dunked in cocoa or coffee, basement workbenches, grandparents. If you didn't experience these things in your own early years, then reading about them induces vicarious nostalgia: homesickness for a home you never had. And what all the details in "Little Follies" have in common is that practically every one of them grows fragrant, delicately deepens in color, and emerges crisply as metaphor—which is to say, ordinary things take on the kind of significance that children involuntarily attach to objects and actions. Everything seems to mean something. Everything seems to mean more than what you're told it means.

Eliciting this sensation is the job of literary art—to catch life in its snares and, by the pattern and form of the snares, to accumulate meaning. In Kraft's novellas, ideas like "toast" and "clams" take on so much freight, with so much of it humorous, that they become like those jokes shared by prisoners—so well known that you only have to say a number to draw a laugh. Toast, for example, begins to acquire import when the infant Peter is disgusted by a slice's sogginess but chafed by the dry parts, and so causes Dudley Beaker to comment windily that the slice represents "the elusive, ever-receding twilight line of this moment, ahead of which lies an abrasive future, and behind which we leave a messy past." Clams, however, are the real leitmotiv of the book. Clamming is the chief industry of Babbington; the town's driveways are paved with crushed clamshells, and shapely shells are recycled as knickknacks by Bivalve By-products. Dudley's posters for the Babbington Clam Council fill a couple of pages in the book, in the form of illustrations with corny script proclaiming "Clamshells—the answer to family boredom!" And so on. Clams are referred to as "the elusive quahog," "tender little darlings," and "tasty bivalves." The meaning of the Babbington universe hangs on alternative

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allegiances—to chicken or to clams—as both food and way of life (or backyard commercial farming versus the romance of the sea, to put it in a way that echoes the book's bias). The apotheosis of clamdom is reached in "The Fox and the Clam," in which the clam clearly represents only one thing—being happy-as-a—but does so in a set of thematic variations (ranging from a Saturday-afternoon cartoon about a happy hippo and an unhappy one to a deadly competition having to do with skipping third grade) that raise complicated farce to the level of calculus.

If animated cartoons could be incorporated between hard covers, Eric Kraft would probably unreel the hippo cartoon. The book reproduces, as if in facsimile, typed and scribbled-over letters, which cast the shadow of their edges on the page, and sections from a children's reader and from instructional journals. There are maps, and there is a page in an encyclopedia's small type, complete with accompanying "engraved" illustration. The urge to include all of life, to be comprehensive, marks the conspicuous literary overachievers—Proust, Tolstoy, Joyce—and Kraft's style of refining distinctions almost to the point of finickiness is related to that urge. In these novellas, however, the devices also seem to be an aspect of the author's modesty; it's as if his words could not bring enough of the world into a book. And the novellas invoke what has been conventionally looked upon as a degraded form, the comic book. The series grew out of a picture-and-print Peter Leroy newsletter that Eric Kraft began sending to a couple of hundred friends and then to their friends during the nineteen-seventies. Kraft refers to this as "samizdat" publication, but it is strikingly American, recalling in its nature, and in the affectionate cultishness with which it was welcomed, the cartoons of R. Crumb, Harvey Pekar (whose miserable autobiographies are sometimes drawn by R. Crumb), and Art Spiegelman.

As much as anything else, though, Kraft's little follies are the work of an ardent reader, who gives others of his kind what they love most; these novellas are his own big and ever-growing "Little Folks' Big Book." In them, the world of the imagination and the world that produces cars, junk, and an opposite sex are a peaceable kingdom. In the preface to "The Fox and the Clam" he writes:

> All the characters in books live in the same place, the *Big-Book* place, and I've painted in so much of it over the years that I have a picture of a well-populated town, where, with Albertine on my arm, I sometimes walk along a shady street on a summer morning and pause to watch the talking squirrels gather nuts in Emma Bovary's front yard while Tom Sawyer paints her fence.

—Anna Shapiro

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Day of Atonement, by A. Alvarez (Random House; $21). This work of fiction is as much thriller as novel; for every convincing domestic or psychological detail, there's an unnerving little surprise. It's about a childless middle-aged English couple, Joe and Judy, who get mixed up in some risky business when their wealthy friend Tommy drops dead. Officially, Tommy died of a heart attack, but his legacy includes a packing crate full of Hungarian toy trains that are full of something else, a gang of unsavory associates who are convinced that the clueless Joe and Judy have some information they want, and a financial blessing that could turn out to be a curse. Joe and Judy narrate alternating chapters, and this construction becomes vital as their intimacy breaks down and their agendas diverge: Joe loses himself in the macho politics of avenging Tommy's death, while Judy gets shrewder, and discovers that suspicion turns her on. This novel gives you that longed-for feeling of forgetting yourself in a book—and the author doesn't settle for an easy solution to the mystery or the marriage.

Primitive People, by Francine Prose (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $20). Simone impulsively flees Haiti when her lover runs off with her best friend; one week she has a coveted embassy job in Port-au-Prince, and the next she finds herself working illegally as an au pair in a dilapidated Hudson Valley mansion. Francine Prose's eighth novel is a sharp anthropological satire of the world that Simone discovers there, as she attempts to understand the customs of its self-absorbed inhabitants. Her melancholy charges, George and Maisie, cut eyes out of the family portraits for their paper dolls and bury used light bulbs, while their mother

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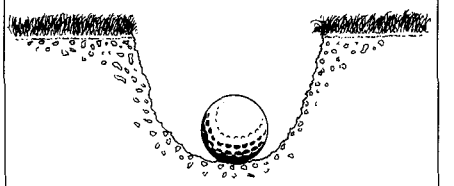

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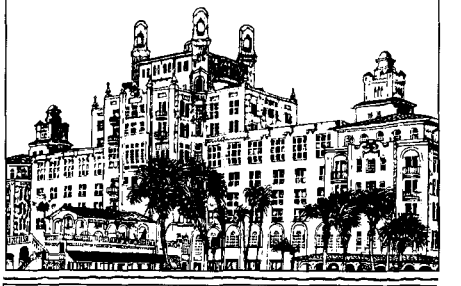

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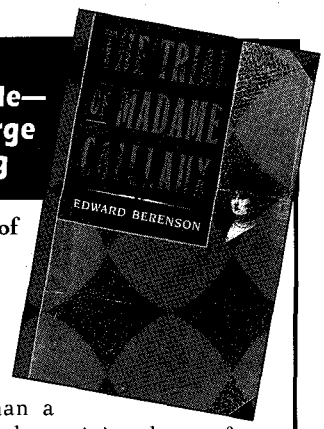

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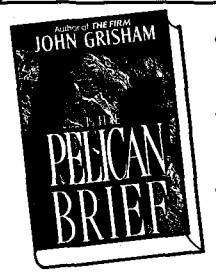

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traipses around in a moth-eaten fur, complaining about the genetic deficiencies in their father's bloodline. This novel has little plot, but the author's hilarious cultural puzzlements and broad caricatures give it a manic, almost madcap air. One feels betrayed yet exhilarated when Ms. Prose then raises the stakes and changes the rules, and the vulnerability of characters one has grown to care about becomes chillingly clear.

THE LIVING, by Annie Dillard (HarperCollins; $30). A multi-generational saga about the settling of the Pacific Northwest from around 1850 to the turn of the century. For the most part, fans of Ms. Dillard will search in vain for the kind of fervent nature writing that is her trademark (the natural world here, in her first novel, is an obstacle rather than a vessel of meaning), and they will also have to look hard for anything resembling real characters or a plot. What happens simply is that people die, in every imaginable way—in wagon accidents, in fires, by drowning, by inhaling poison gas, from fevers and from mysterious earaches—and new people are wheeled out to replace them. The book has obviously been carefully researched, and both the setting and the individuals who inhabit it are convincing in a daguerreotype fashion—they seem touchingly antique, that is—but they never completely come to life. As a result, all the loss and death seem wasteful and inefficient rather than truly affecting.

GENERAL

DRIVEN PATRIOT: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMES FORRESTAL, by Townsend Hoopes and Douglas Brinkley (Knopf; $30). The sober tone of this biography sets off the gaudy career of its subject. Forrestal, who seems to have epitomized every era he lived through, was born in 1892 to lower-middle-class parents in Beacon, New York. He rose on his own, working as a reporter to put himself through Princeton. During the nineteen-twenties, he made a fortune on Wall Street, bought an estate on Long Island's Gold Coast, and married a beauty as dashing as Zelda Fitzgerald. And, like Zelda, Josephine Forrestal disintegrated, becoming schizophrenic and alcoholic. In 1940, Forrestal went to Washington, where, as Under-Secretary and, later, Secretary of the Navy, he organized that service for modern war more or less against its will, and, although he initially opposed the unification of the armed forces, he became the first Secretary of Defense. But the stresses of his private life, combined with exhaustion, overwhelmed him: he lapsed into a depression and committed suicide in 1949. With calm candor and attention to business, the biographers show how Forrestal contributed to American economic, military, and political history, but they also convey clearly that his was a tragic life.

A POT OF PAINT: AESTHETICS ON TRIAL IN WHISTLER V. RUSKIN, by Linda Merrill (Smithsonian; $35). A thorough recapitulation of the celebrated lawsuit, tried in London in 1878, in which the American expatriate painter James Whistler sought damages for libel from the art critic John Ruskin. Ruskin, at that time the acknowledged arbiter of British taste, singled out one of Whistler's "nocturnes"—night scenes of London with little detail, tending toward the abstract and meant to convey a mood—and wrote, in a review, that he "never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." Whistler, who was broke at the time and always avid for publicity, decided to seek damages. The trial was something of a cause célèbre and something of a joke: a jury found for the plaintiff, but awarded him only a farthing in damages. The book has more than anecdotal interest, lively as that is. Coming on the eve of the modern movement in art, the trial became an airing of the debates on formal values in the plastic arts as opposed to the storytelling tradition of the salons. Little did those who railed at such mild pictures as Whistler's nocturnes realize what lay in store for them. Time was to justify Whistler, too—he got his farthing's worth.

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Not only does Billy have several studies which are being published, but also he is planning a project in which he will investigate the developmental stages of a freshwater fish and compare it to a close relative. —*The High School, the alumni magazine of the Alexandria (Va.) Episcopal High School.*

The one who's always out by the pool.

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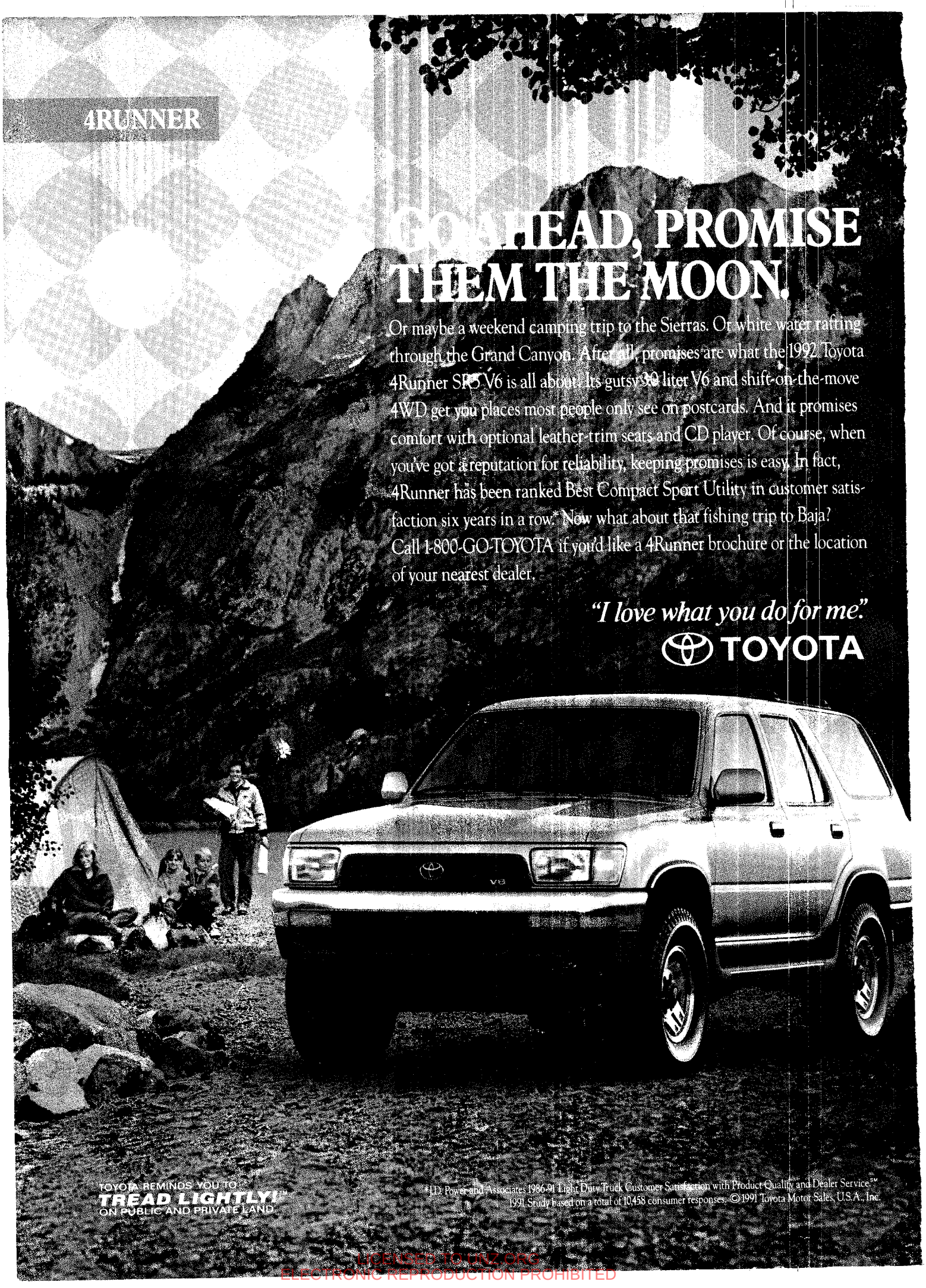

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